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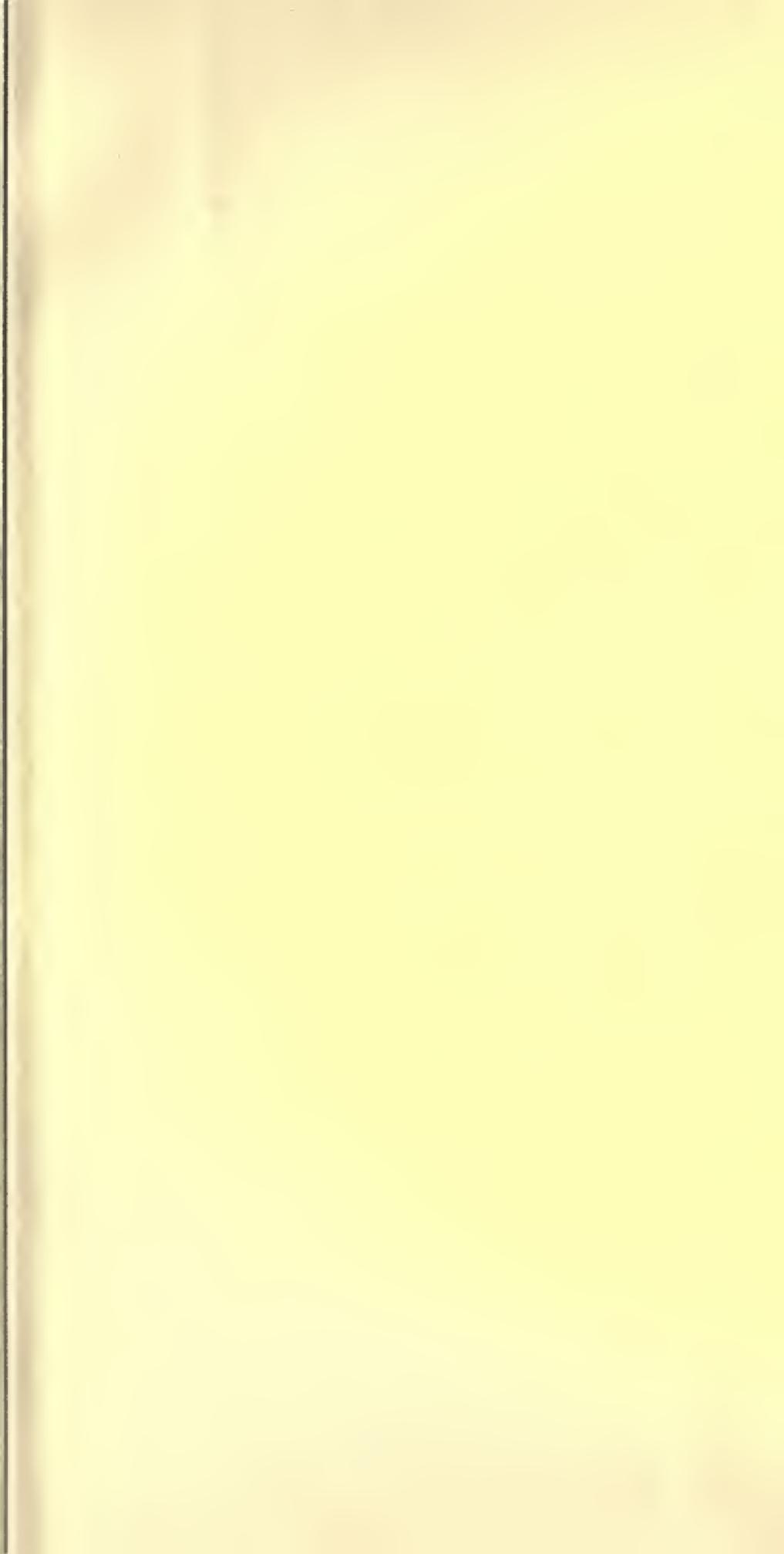
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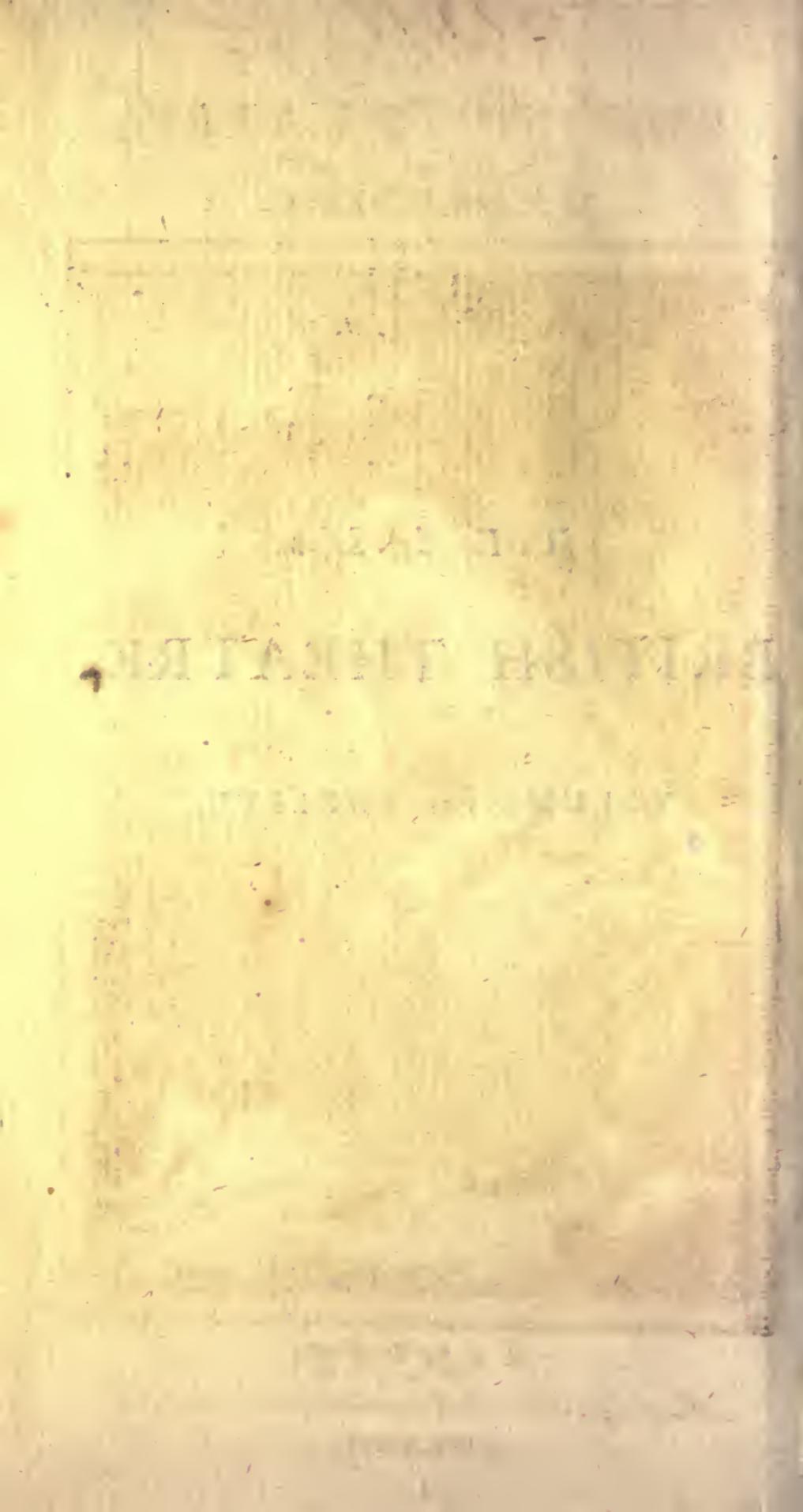
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B E L L'

BRITISH THEATRE,

VOLUME THE TWELFTH.



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BRITISH THEATRE;
TRAGEDIES.



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Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange in the
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BRITISH THEATRE,

Consisting of the most esteemed

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25 APRIL

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND

BY HENRY SPENCER

ENGLISH PLATE

BY HENRY SPENCER

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND
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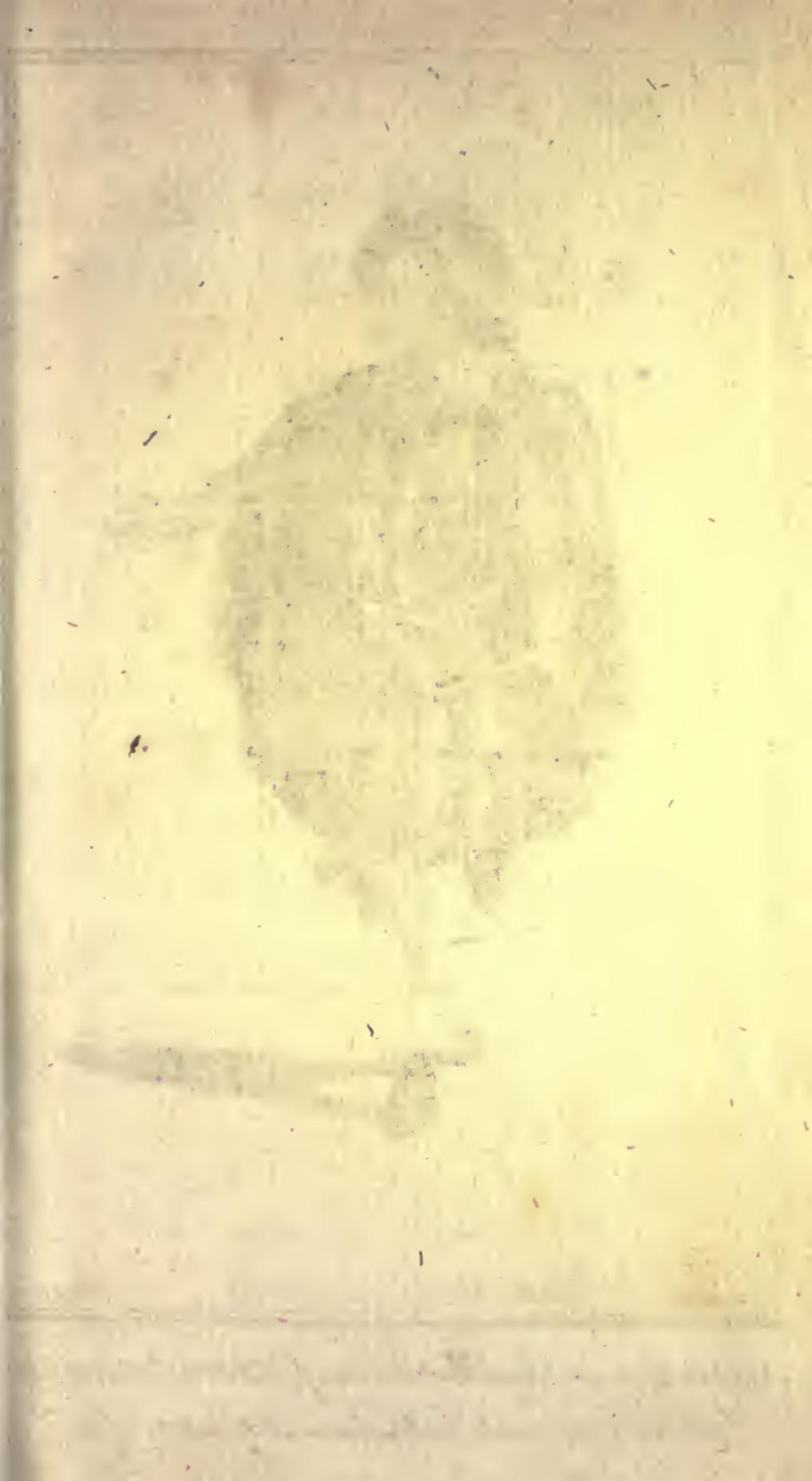
BY HENRY SPENCER

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND

BY HENRY SPENCER

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND

BY HENRY SPENCER





MR. HULL in the Character of KING CHARLES.
Deny'd to speak! why have I lived to this?

BELL'S EDITION.

—
KING CHARLES I.

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

As written by Mr. HAVARD.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE

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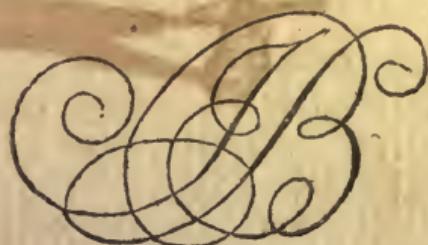
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book.

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS.

—*Quis talia fando
Temperet à lacrymis?* —

VIRG.



—
L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

—
M D C C L X X V I I .

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1771

To Her GRACE the

D U C H E S S

OF

M A R L B O R O U G H.

MADAM,

ADDRESSES, unauthorised by merit, are too frequent, and (what should be more surprising) often successful.

I would willingly approach in what I think the best shape, and choose rather to appear dressed in the opinion of the town, than my own.

I have been favoured with the general approbation, yet am still conscious of weakness, and know not where to sue more properly for protection, than to your Grace: believe this, Madam, when I assure you, that I will always sacrifice my interest—to my sincerity.

I am an enemy to flattery; and, therefore, to be sure to be thoroughly disengaged from it, apply to a person who wants it not.

The greatness of mind I have constantly considered beyond that of the person; and when I say that you are a good woman, I think I say more than I should by styling you a great duchess. By confirming yourself the first, you have eminently proved yourself the latter. In this last opinion I apply myself to the world—not to your Grace, conscious that you are the only person that will not join in it.

I have little title to address your Grace, more than in the assurance that the smallest merit does not go unregarded

garded by you. I confess myself obscure; but shall not think so, if your Grace looks upon me with the eye of favour: for, believe me, I have more ambition to merit your Grace's esteem, than any other consideration that may be suggested; and shall ever think myself honoured in subscribing myself,

Your Grace's most devoted,

Most obedient,

And most humble servant.



T H E
P R E F A C E.

To obviate any criticism that may justly fall upon the inaccuracy of this play, I judged it necessary to publish a few lines as an apology for the liberties I have taken with the history, and the faults that may appear to the judicious reader. And though the uncommon and general applause it has met with in the representation may seem to make it unnecessary, yet, without it. I could not acquit myself to my own judgment.

And first, as to the liberties I have taken with history, I hope I may be forgiven my introducing the queen, who was in France at the time I have laid the action of the play; but it being a story barren of female characters, I was induced to make her appear; and because I thought there would very naturally arise a pleasing distress at their parting, which I have introduced at the beginning of the fourth act.

Again, to heighten the distress in the last act, and to bring on one supposed to receive and convey the advice better, that the king sends by him to his eldest son, Charles, James appears, who, at that juncture, was in Holland. I have made an excuse for Cromwell's coming to the king, because I thought an interview between them was necessary, and would add to the spirit of the whole.

I am not conscious of any other liberties I have taken, except heightening the characters of Fairfax and his lady; which has added a warmth to the piece, and in some measure supplied the want of real matter to constitute five acts. The other persons in the drama are as strongly characterised, and as impartially, as I had ability, and the shortness of the time would permit.

There were some speeches omitted in the representation, which I have restored in print; and the reader may particularize them, if he thinks it worth while, by remarking a comma prefixed to each line.

I must now do myself the pleasure to address those gentlemen of known judgment and great candour, whose corrections (though in so short a time for making them) have done me honour, and given reputation to the piece. Some I have not an opportunity of thanking personally; and therefore do it thus publicly, and declare, that nothing could equal the justness of their remarks, but their sincerity and humanity in delivering them.

I now throw the piece before the reader; and hope it will prove as agreeable an entertainment in the closet, as it seemed to be upon the stage.



P R O L O G U E.

Written by a FRIEND.

IN former times, when wit was no offence,
 And men submitted to be pleas'd with sense—
 Then was the stage fair virtue's fav'rite school,
 Scourge of the knave, and mirror of the fool.
 Here oft the villain's conscious blush would rise,
 And fools become, by viewing folly, wise.
 Our bard, as then, despises song and dance,
 The notes of Italy, and jigs of France :
 With home distress's he nobly hopes to move,
 And fire each bosom with its country's love—
 So much a Briton—that he scorns to roam
 To foreign climes, to fetch his hero home—
 Conscious, that in these scenes is clearly shewn
 Britain can boast true heroes of her own.
 Murder avow'd by law he boldly paints,
 Heroes and patriots, hypocrites and saints ;
 Rebellion fighting for the public good,
 And Treason smiling in a monarch's blood.
 Party, be dumb—in each pathetic scene,
 Our muse, to-night, asserts an honest mean ;
 Shews you a prince triumphant o'er his fate,
 Glorious in death, as in misfortunes great ;
 By nature virtuous, tho' misled by slaves,
 By tools of power, by sycophants and knaves.
 When Charles submits to faction's deadly blow,
 What loyal heart but shares the monarch's woe ?
 Nor less Maria's grief, ye gentle fair,
 Claims the sad tribute of a tender tear.
 From British scenes to-night we hope applause,
 And Britons sure will aid a British cause.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Drury-Lane.

King <i>Charles</i> .	Mr. Giffard.
Duke of <i>York</i> ,	Master Giffard.
Duke of <i>Gloucester</i> ,	Master W. Hamilton.
Bishop <i>Juxon</i> ,	Mr. Havard.
Duke of <i>Richmond</i> ,	Mr. Bardin.
Marquis of <i>Lindsey</i> ,	Mr. Richardson.
<i>Oliver Cromwell</i> ,	Mr. Wright.
<i>Fairfax</i> ,	Mr. Johnson.
<i>Bradshaw</i> ,	Mr. Rosco.
<i>Ireton</i> ,	Mr. W. Giffard.
Colonel <i>Tomlinson</i> ,	Mr. Hamilton.

W O M E N.

Queen,	Mrs. Giffard.
Princess <i>Elizabeth</i> ,	Miss Norris.
Lady <i>Fairfax</i> ,	Mrs. Roberts.

SCENE, partly at *St. James's*, and partly at *Whitehall*.

KING CHARLES I.

* * * The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T . I.

Enter Bishop Juxon and Duke of Richmond.

JUXON.

GOOD day, my Lord, if, in a time like this,
Aught that is fortunate or good can happen;
When Desolation, wedded to Despair,
Strides o'er the land, and marks her way with ruin :
Plenty is fled with Justice ; Rage and Rapine
Have robb'd the widow'd matron, England, quite,
And left her now no dowry—but her tears.

Rich. Is it then certain that the lawless Commons
Have form'd a court of justice (so they call it)
To bring the King to trial ?

Jux. 'Tis most true ;
And tho' the Lords refus'd to join the bill,
Yet they proceed without them. Lawless man !
Whither, at last, will thy impieties,
Thy daring insolence extend, when kings
Feel from a subject-hand the scourge of pow'r ?
Where may an injur'd monarch hope for safety,
If he not find it in his people's hearts ?

Rich. Oh, Naseby, Naseby, what a deadly stroke
Was thy ill-fated field to royalty !
On thy success depended monarchy ;
The fate of rebels, and the fate of kings
Hung on thy battle ; but thou, faithless too,
Conspir'd with faction to o'erthrow us all,
And bring to sight these more than bloody times.

Jux.

Jux. To-morrow does the black tribunal sit ;
 When majesty is cited to appear
 Before his tyrant subjects. Oh, preposterous !
 Is't not as bad as if these rebel hands
 Should from their seats tear forth their ruling eyes,
 Whose watch directs the body's use and safety ?

Rieb. It cannot be ! 'Tis not in cruelty
 To think of spilling royal blood. Mercy, sure,
 And the pretended justice of their cause,
 Will save them from the weight of so much guilt.

Jux. What added guilt can that black bosom feel,
 That has shook off allegiance to its king ?
 Whole seas of common and of noble blood
 Will not suffice ; the banquet must be crown'd,
 And the brain heated with the blood of kings.
 But see where Cromwell comes ! Upon his brow
 Dissimulation stamp'd. If I can judge
 By lineament and feature, that man's heart
 Can both contrive and execute the worst
 And the most daring actions yet conceiv'd.
 Ambitious, bloody, resolute and wise,
 He ne'er betrays his meaning till he acts,
 And ne'er looks out but with the eye of purpose.
 His head so cool, that it appears the top
 Of Alpine hill, clad with slow-wasting snow ;
 His execution rapid as the force
 Of falling waters thund'ring down its base.
 Let us avoid him ; for my conscious soul
 Fears him in wonder, and in praise condemns him.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Cromwell.

Crom. Now thro' the maze of gloomy policy
 Has fire-ey'd Faction work'd her way to light,
 And deck'd ambition in the robe of power.
 Our fears in Charles's safety are remov'd,
 And but one blow remains to fix our state —
 The lopping off his head. No more the royal tree
 Shall, from legitimacy's root, presume
 To sprout forth tyrant branches. Commonwealths
 Own no hereditary right, unless our worth
 Shine equal to our birth. Wherefore, at once,
 Down with nobility — the Commons rule !

Avaunt

Avaunt prerogative and lineal title,
And be the right superior merit.

Enter Fairfax.

Fair. I was to seek you, Sir; some lab'ring doubts,
Which, in th' uncertainty of these strange times,
Call for the ray of clearness, make me press
(Perhaps unseasonably) to your ear.
You will forgive th' impatience of a man,
Who labours to be right—by your example.

Crom. Good Fairfax, spare me; I am ill at words,
And utter badly where I mean respect:
Uncouth my answers are to truth and plainness;
But to a compliment I ne'er could speak:
Yet could you look into my secret mind,
There my soul speaks to Fairfax as to one
Book'd in the fairest page of my esteem,
And written on my heart — But to your doubts.

Fair. You may remember, Sir, when first my sword,
My fortune, life, and still, yet more—my honour,
Were all engag'd to fight the cause of justice;
You thought, with me, the wrongs to be redress'd,
Were the attempts upon the subjects' right,
The unregarded laws, and bold design
To stretch prerogative to boundless rule.
Design full fair and noble! and th' event
Has crown'd our utmost wishes. England owns
No arbitrary sway; the King's adherents
Are all dispers'd, or the remains so few,
They are not worth a fear; the King himself
In close confinement. Now, let reason judge,
And blend discretion with success.
Let us be just—but let us stop at justice,
Nor by too hasty zeal o'ershoot the mark.
The Roman spirits, savage as they were,
When they determin'd to abolish kings,
Shed not the blood of Tarquin, but expell'd him;
And shall we, owners of the Christian law,
Where mercy shines the foremost attribute,
Be harder to appease? If not more mild,
Let us not be more cruel than barbarians.
Charles grasp'd, we own, at arbitrary sway,
And would have been a tyrant—for which crime,

The kingdoms he was born to we have seiz'd.
 But let us not despoil him of his life.
 Crowns, as the gift of men, men may resume ;
 But life, the gift of Heaven, let Heaven dispose of.

Crom. Well have you weigh'd each growing circum-
 And held discretion in the nicest scale. [stance,
 Our fears remov'd, the subject right restor'd,
 What have we more to do, than to sit down,
 And each enjoy the vineyard of his toil ?
 'Tis true—but yet some clamours are abroad ;
 Petitions daily crowd the parliament,
 That loudly call for justice on the King,
 Imputing to his charge the guilt of murders,
 The desolation that has bared the land,
 And swept the crops of plenty from our fields.

Fair. What, shall the rabble judge ; those servile curs,
 Who, as they eat in plenty, snarl sedition ?
 Are these to be regarded ?

Crom. You mistake me.
 'Tis not their outcries only ; but, indeed,
 Those who see farther, and with better judgment,
 Fear, while he lives, his friends will never die ;
 But, by some foreign force or home design,
 May sometime shake the safety of the state.
 Besides, they speak of an approv'd good maxim,
 Remove the cause, and the effect will cease.
 Oh, worthy Fairfax, thou art wise and valiant !
 I have seen thee watch occasion, till advantage
 Came smiling to thy arms, and crown'd thy patience :
 And then, in fight, I have beheld thy sword
 Out-fly the pace of pestilential air,
 And kill in multitudes.

Fair. Good Sir, forbear.

Crom. Blush not to hear a truth, when Cromwell speaks
 My uncouth manner, ill at varnishing,
 Beggars my will, and dresses praise uncomely.
 Methinks I see thee in the rage of battle,
 When Naseby's field confess'd thy victor arm,
 And thy decision was the fate of kings.
 Methinks I view thee in the bustling ranks,
 Where danger was the nearest—(for you brought it)
 Unhelm'd, encounter armies, and despise
 The safety that the meanest soldier wore ;

And

And when a private man, with bold assertion,
 Challeng'd a conquest which your arm had gain'd,
 And was reprov'd; methinks, I hear you say,
 I have enough of glory, let him own it.

Fair. Whither does all this tend? I pray forbear—
 I never fought in hopes to have it told:

The man whose actions speak, expects no answer.

Crom. I do but barely tell thee what thou art,
 And what the world may yet expect of Fairfax.
 The diamond, Merit, in the quarry hid,
 Being unknown, unseen, attracts no eyes,
 But digg'd up by the lab'rer's curiosity,
 And polish'd by the hand of gratitude,
 It shines the ornament of human life.—

Think therefore what you are, and what this juncture:
 The fairest lock of fortune is display'd,
 And should be seiz'd on by the bold and worthy.

Fair. You talk in clouds above my purpose quite;
 Which was but to enforce the cause of mercy,
 And shew how much is gain'd by stopping here;
 To tell you what my conscience makes opinion,
 And strengthen that opinion by your voice.

Crom. 'Tis true indeed—I had forgot myself;
 But whither was I hurried in my zeal?
 E'en I can descant on a pleasing theme:
 Can you forgive me? though 'tis hard indeed;
 Exalted virtue can with ease forgive
 A calumny, but not a praise.—No more,
 Heav'n can witness for me, with what true accord
 My thoughts meet yours! How willing I would stop
 The arm of violence, and make the law,
 Stern as she is, assume a face of smiles.

The death of Charles is far from my design—
 And yet the general outcry is for justice:
 He has been much to blame, you know he has;
 And (but I soften those unruly thoughts)
 Were I to speak the dictates of my heart,
 I could not find a punishment too great
 To fall upon the man, who should, like Charles,
 Forget all right, and waste with lavish hand
 The rich revenue of his people's love.

Fair. Dearly he suffers for misguided steps,
And knows that misery he meant to give ;
He feels the bondage he design'd for us,
And by the want of freedom counts its value.

Crom. I pity him ; and would the commons think with
He were as safe as Cromwell ; and, brave Fairfax, [me,
We will endeavour it ; and may that power,
Whose arm has fought the battle of our cause,
Incline 'em all to think like you,—or me ; [Aside.
I will about it. Yet remember, Fairfax,
The posture of these times : consider too,
How great your expectations ought to be :
Would Fairfax listen to the voice of Cromwell,
He should have nearer hopes than Charles's life :
Somewhat as great as your desert should crown you,
And make you partner of the highest honours. [Exit.

Fair. The highest honours ! what can Cromwell mean ?
Acquit me, Heav'n ! I fought not but for justice,
Rage fir'd me not, nor did ambition blind ;
No party led me, and no interest bound :
My tie was conscience, and my cause was freedom.
When Fairfax listens to another call,
May his next stroke in battle be his last.

Enter Ireton.

Ire. Fairfax, I come, commission'd by the army,
To know your pleasure, if you think it meet
That they should march and quarter nearer London :
The public safety makes it requisite :
But they attend your orders ere they move.

Fair. The public safety ! Say what new alarm,
What danger so awakes security,
That in her fright, she thus lays hold of caution ?

Ire. The safety of the commons, of yourself,
Of the high court of justice ; who to-morrow
Against a tyrant proves the people's pow'r,
And brings offending majesty to justice :
This may excite his yet remaining friends,
Arm'd with despair, to some attempt of danger.
Who can be too secure ? The man whose pillow
Prevention guards, may sleep in ease and safety.

Fair. To bring offending majesty to justice ?

Ire. To the scaffold.

Fair.

Fair. Ha !

Ire. Why do you start ?

Fair. Your zeal too much transports you.

Ireton, farewell,—and let me gain belief,

When I affirm this moral to thy ear :

Conscience than empire more content can bring,

And to be just, is to be more than king.

[Exit.]

Enter Cromwell.

Crom. It is enough, good kinsman, let him go—
And yet I could well wish that he was ours—
But 'tis no matter—You began to warm,
And the good cause sat burning on thy cheek ;
Thou hast a well-turn'd tongue : but list thee, Ireton,
Hear my design (for still my heart is thine)
The commons most are ours : the weeder's care
Has, from the garden of our enterprize,
Thrown out the rubbish that disgrac'd the soil :
And now our growth looks timely. This you saw,
When by my means a hundred doubted members
Were by the army seiz'd upon their entrance,
And since expell'd the house. Independency
Roots itself fast ; while presbytery force
Withers unseen. Would Fairfax had been ours !

Ire. I cannot see that his adherence to us
Could prosper much our cause, or his defection
Make us decline one moment from our purpose.

Crom. You mistake, Ireton, Fairfax stands the first
In interest with the very men I hate :
Therefore his joint endeavour would be found
The easiest means to bring my point to bear ;
Besides, he stands the fairest in the love
Of our whole party. Were we link'd together,
The army too were ours ; and their keen swords
Are powerful arguments. We shall thrive however—
I have it—He shall hence, and on an expedition
Not the most just ; I know his squeamish honour,
If it surmise an action the least tainted,
Will throw up this employment : then 'tis mine :
And while I have Dame Fortune, she shall please me.

Ire. But the main turn of all your enterprize
Hangs on to-morrow, on the death of Charles :

'Tis from his scaffold only you must mount
To what your wishes aim at.

Crom. Fear not that.

I have to do with men, upon whose tempers
I know to work—Those who love piety,
I with the vehemence of prayer encounter,
And through the spirit practise on their passions.
Those who are crafty, I subdue with fraud,
And wile them to my purpose. To the bloody
I promise slaughters, deaths and executions :
Gold gains the covetous ; and praise the proud.
There is another sort—but they are easy ;
Your honest men, who never wear distrust ;
For honesty's the jaundice of the mind,
That makes us think our neighbours like ourselvess :
Let us together, Ireton, here it lies ;
When fools believe, wise men are sure to rise. [Exeunt.]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T. II.

Enter Fairfax.

OH, glory ! how deceitful is thy view !
Such are thy charms, that o'er th' uncertain way
Of vice or faction, thou, to hide the danger,
Dost to the outward eye shew fair appearance :
Which when the follower steps on, down he sinks,
And then too late looks backward to the path
Of long neglected virtue.

Enter Lady Fairfax.

Lady Fair. My dearest Fairfax, call not this intrusion ;
Long has obedience combated with love,
Ere I would press upon your privacy :
If love has conquer'd, love may be forgiven.
The faults of tenderness (if faults they are)
E'en in offending wear the seal of pardon.
Why are you thus alone ; and why thus chang'd ?

Fair. My gentle lady, thoughts of deep concern,
That to the last recesses of my soul

Travel

Travel, with pain and penitence their guides,
At length have found the company they like ;
Busy Reflection, moping Melancholy,
And Silence the sure guard that keeps the door.

Lady Fair. I cannot blame your griefs ; but come to
Indeed the cause is just : but good my Lord, [share 'em,
Let not despair take hold of that brave heart,
And boast a conquest which your foes ne'er could.
If (as I long have thought) the King be wrong'd,
Seek to redress, and not lament his fortunes.
I am a woman, not design'd for war,
Yet could this hand (weak as you think its grasp)
Nerv'd by my heart's companion, resolution,
Display the royal banner in the field,
And shame the strength of manhood in this cause.
Forgive this warmth : I ne'er till now, my Lord,
Gave you unask'd my thoughts, but I perceive
Your heart is wounded, and I came to heal it :
To offer you the balm of wholesome counsel,
And temper my persuasion with my love.

Fair. Thou hast been more than I could hope in woman :
Thy beauty, thy least excellence. Thou appear'st
Like a fair tree, the glory of the plain,
The root thy honour, and the trunk thy friendship,
(That stands the rudest blast of cold adversity)
From whence branch out a thousand different boughs ;
Candour, humility, and angel truth,
And every leaf a virtue. True, my love,
While I conceiv'd our liberties in danger,
I fought in their defence ; but cannot bear
This bold design upon the life of Charles.
We took up arms to keep the law entire,
Not to defend its open violation.

Lady Fair. I know thy honest heart, it hates a wrong :
'Twas principle, not party, urg'd thee on
To fight their cause : but Cromwell's specious wiles
Pervert the justice of thy fair designs,
And make thy virtue pander to his will.

Fair. Cromwell has art—but still I think him honest :
Yet in our late discourse his speech, methought,
Appear'd disjointed ; and he wav'd the theme
I spoke about—The safety of the King—

At parting too, his words betray'd a purpose
Beyond the limits of a commonwealth ;
And talk'd of highest honours—but I hope
That my suspicions wrong him.

Lady Fair. No, my Lord ;
Rather increase 'em, keep 'em still alive
To arm against his black designs : discretion,
At the surmise of danger, wakes incessant ;
Nor drops the eye-lid 'till she sleeps in safety.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. The duke of Richmond and a reverend bishop
Desire to see you.

Fair. Wait upon them hither ;
I guess at their desires, and wou'd to Heav'n
My pow'r could grant 'em what my wish confirms !

Lady Fair. And wherefore not, my Lord ? The army
yours,
Who can dispute your will ? Command them hither.
And be their threats the safety of the King. [nefs.]

Fair. Betray my trust ! Thou canst not mean such base-
Should I (which much I doubt, for Cromwell's faction
Equals my pow'r, and more, among the soldiers)
Make 'em revolt, what would my conscience say ?
'Twould be a mountain crime, a molehill good.
The whiteness of my fair design to Charles,
Spread o'er the visage of the means that gave it ;
Like thinnest lawn upon an *Aethiop* face,
Would cover, not conceal the blacknes. No, my love,
Virtue and baseness never meet together.

Enter Bishop Juxon and Duke of Richmond.

Juxon. A mournful errand, good my Lord of Fairfax,
Makes us thus rude. My gentle Lady, stay ; —
Your voice will help the music of our plaint,
And swell the notes to moving melody :
Ill-fated Charles, deserted as he is,
Lives in your fair report (or fame has err'd)
Join in our concert, as you are next his heart,
You know to touch the string that sounds to pity.

Fair. My Lords, I guess your purpose, and assure you
If my persuasion or my wish avail,
Charles feels no stroke, 'till nature gives the blow.
Long may the fruit of health adorn the tree,
And ripen with his years in warmer times !

Rich. 'Tis truly spoke, my Lord, and worthy Fairfax ;
Whom I have still consider'd in this light ;
As nobly just, and but at worst misled.

Juxon. How would this man adorn the royal cause ?
Who makes rebellion wear the face of virtue !

{*Aside to Richmond.*

How I am pleas'd to find you feel this woe,
And strive for its prevention—Let these speak—

[*Weeps.*

These eyes must else have known the dismal office
To see the widow's and the orphans' sorrows :
Complaint had been my language, care my bed,
And contemplation my uneasy pillow.
Now by your hopes of mercy plead this cause ;
Know it a labour that will pay itself,
E'en in this world—and when you mount above,
You will behold it of so vast a value,
It will out-weigh th' offences of your life.

Fair. Without this intercession, good my Lord,
I had done all within my feeble pow'r ;
Yet think what outeries din the parliament,
How many zealots call aloud for justice !
Then think what you may hope, and what not fear.

Lady Fair. No matter, Fairfax ; 'tis a virtuous cause,
And Heav'n will bless the purpose with success.

Juxon. There mercy spoke, and in her softest voice :
And Heaven, I doubt not, signs the prophecy.

Enter Cromwell.

Crom. Indeed ! Does Fairfax keep such company ?
Shame on his pitying heart ! His soul's uninann'd,
His resolution dwindled to a girl's :
Now, in the name of fight, is this the man
Whom armies fled from, and whom conquest lov'd ?
Behold him now crept to a private corner,
Counting out tears with priests and women. [*Aside.*

Fair. See
Where Cromwell comes, I will once more assail him,
And be yourselves the witness of his answer.
Good Cromwell, welcome ! And let my petition,
Join'd with these lords, prevail upon your pity ;
Let Charles have life : is that so hard a boon ?
In lieu of three fair kingdoms, give him life.

Crom.

Crom. Why this address to me? Am I the parliament?
 'Tis they who justly call him to account,
 And form this high tribunal.

Juxon. Justly, Cromwell!

Crom. Ay, good bishop, justly!
 I cry you mercy! By the good old cause!

It is but gratitude in you to plead:

Episcopacy was the rock he split on;

And he has ventur'd fairly for your lawn:

How learnedly did he uphold your cause,

When Henderson inveigh'd against your miters,

Did he not write full nobly? Say'st thou, bishop?

Juxon. His conscience prompted him to what did;
 His zeal for us can never be forgotten.

Crom. His conscience! you say true—his conscience
 He would have stretch'd to arbitrary sway, [did it:
 And swallow'd down our liberties and laws:
 His conscience would have soon digested them.

Fair. Let us not into insult turn our pow'r;
 Good fortune is not wedded to our arms:
 Conquest, like a young maiden with her lover,
 If roughly treated, turns her smiles to frowns,
 And hates where once she lov'd.

Crom. I stand corrected.

To me then you apply in Charles's favour,
 And wait my answer, which is briefly thus:
 I am but one, and (as the weaker must)
 Flow in the current of majority:
 My single voice be it against, or for,
 Avails him little: if the rest incline
 To think of mercy and of Charles together,
 'Tis fairly done, and e'en to Cromwell's wish:
 This is the sum of all I can deliver—
 Fairfax, I have matter for your private ear.

Juxon. We humbly take our leaves.

Fair. My lords, farewell!

[*Exeunt Jux. Rich. and Lady Fairfax.*]

Crom. How can you waste your time on trash like this?
 Were Fairfax' honour to be doubted, this might make
 The child suspicion grow to certainty;
 But we are confident in you: your actions speak.
 Yet, Fairfax, do not let thy noble eye

Catch the contagion of weak-judging pity,
And sympathize with beggars. To my purpose :
The council, at whose head your wisdom fits,
Weighing some depositions 'gainst the King,
Would have your judgment's sanction : they request
Your presence there ; I bear their will with pleasure.

Fair. It is not needed, Sir.

As to the purpose of their meeting, say,
If they incline to mercy, let their charge
Be weaker than it is ; but if to rigour,
They have, I fear, too much of that already :
Let 'em (if friendly Fairfax may advise)
Judge with that candour, they expect of Heaven.

Crom. You will not go then ?

Fair. Say I cannot go.

My reason pleads against so bad a deed,
And inclination holds me ; nay, yet more,
A secret impulse strikes upon my soul,
Which, though I had the will, would yet detain me.

Crom. Folly and superstition ! Drive 'em hence ;
And in exchange, wear honours and renown :
Of this I've said—And, noble Fairfax, believe me,
That when the wind of promise and of hope
Stretches the canvass out of resolution,
The bark, Design, flies swift before the gale,
And quickly anchors in Good-fortune's bay ;
Then we unlade our freight of doubts and fears,
And barter 'em for happiness and glory. [Exit.]

Fair. He who embarks himself in Cromwell's ship,
Out-sails fair truth and ev'ry honest purpose.
'Tis now too plain—How could I doubt so long ?
My honesty has made me Cromwell's tool :
His arts have turn'd my virtue to a sword,
And now 'tis bared against me.
But say, shall Fairfax, who in open field
An army could not conquer, fall a prey,
To the ambitious prospects of one man ?
No, Fairfax, rouse up thy resentment's force,
And rescue thy renown from infamy. [Exit.]

SCENE, *a Chamber.*

King Charles discovered reading.

King. What art thou, life, so dearly lov'd by all?—
 What are thy charms, that thus the great desire thee,
 And to retain thee part with pomp and titles?—
 To buy thy presence, the gold-watching miser
 Will pour his bags of mouldy treasure out,
 And grow at once a prodigal. The wretch
 Clad with disease and poverty's thin coat,
 Yet holds thee fast, though painful company.
 Oh, life! thou universal wish, what art thou?—
 Thou'rt but a day—a few uneasy hours:
 Thy morn is greeted by the flocks and herds,
 And every bird that flatters with its note,
 Salutes thy rising sun; thy noon approaching,
 Then haste the flies and every creeping insect
 To bask in thy meridian; that declining
 As quickly they depart, and leave thy evening
 To mourn the absent ray: night at hand,
 Then croaks the raven conscience, time mispent;
 The owl Despair screams hideous, and the bat
 Confusion flutters up and down—
 Life's but a lengthen'd day not worth the waking for.

Enter Queen.

My dearest Queen!

I have been summing up th' amount of life,
 But found no value in it, 'till you came.

Queen. Do not perplex yourself with thoughts like
 Ill fortune at the worst, returns to better, [those:
 At least we think so, as it grows familiar.

King. No, I was only arming for the worst.
 I have try'd the temper of my inmost soul,
 And find it ready now for all encounters:
 Death cannot shake it.

Queen. Do not talk of death:
 The apprehension shakes my tender heart;
 Ages of love, I hope, are yet to come,
 Ere that black hour arrives: such chilling thoughts
 Disgrace the lodging of that noble breast.

King. What have I not to fear? Thus close confin'd;
 To-morrow forc'd to trial. Will those men,

Who

Who insolently drag me to the bar,
 Stop in the middle of their purpose? No.
 I must prepare for all extremities:
 And (be that Pow'r ador'd, that lends me comfort)
 I feel I am—Oh, do not weep, my Queen;
 Rather rejoice with me, to find my thoughts
 Outstretch the painful verge of human life,
 And have no wish on earth—but thee! 'Tis there
 Indeed I feel: peace and resignation
 Had wander'd o'er the rooms of every thought,
 To shut misfortune out, but left this door
 Unclos'd, through which Calamity
 Has enter'd in thy shape to seize my heart.

Queen. Be more yourself, my Lord; let majesty
 Take root within thy heart, nor meanly bend
 Before ill fortune's blast.

King. Oh, doubt me not!
 'Tis only on the side where you are plac'd,
 That I can know a fear. For Charles's self,
 Let fierce encounter with the sword of danger
 Bring him to bloodiest proof; and if he shrinks,
 Despise him. Here, I glory in my weakness.
 He is no man whom tenderness not melts,
 And love so soft as thine. Let us go in.
 And if kind Heav'n designs me longer stay
 On this frail earth, I shall be only pleas'd,
 Because I have thy presence here to crown me.
 But if it destines my immediate end;
 (Hard as it is, my Queen, to part with thee)
 I say, farewell, and to the blow resign,
 That strikes me here—to make me more divine.

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

(Enter Cromwell and Bradshaw,

CROMWELL.

IT shall be better, Bradshaw : do not think
 Désert, though lowly plac'd, escapes our eye ;
 To me it is as precious in the valley,
 As glittering on the mountain's top : —
 I praise myself that I have found thee out :
 'Tis not my favour, Bradshaw, but thy worth
 Brings thee to light ; thou dost not owe me aught.
 Now, Bradshaw, art thou our high president.
 Thou hast a heart well temper'd to the cause :
 Thou look'st on monarchy in a true light :
 And where the cause is just wilt shut out pity.
 Pity !
 The fool's forgiveness and the mother's tear :
 The indiscretion of th' unpractis'd maid,
 Who through that organ hears her lover's plaint,
 And listens to her ruin.

Brad. My good Sir,
 Think not of Bradshaw thus. My soul is firm ;
 The melting eye and the relenting heart
 Ne'er wrong'd my resolution. As to kings,
 To monarchy, and to superior state,
 That I disclaim'd ; 'till your exalted merit
 Alter'd my purpose in my own despite,
 And when I meant to level, rais'd you high.

Crom. Spoke in a hearty zeal for our good cause.
 That I have the same thoughts of thee, let this,
 Thy present weighty office, speak, which should,
 If Cromwell's nature bent to partiality,
 Have fallen upon my kinsman, Ireton ; one
 Of good regard and hearty in the service :
 But Cromwell's heart points only to desert,
 The north of all his purpose. Thou art ours ;
 And though thy modesty at first declin'd
 To fit our head, and lead our counsels right,

Yet

Yet I determin'd not to lose thy worth,
If importunity could win it.

Brad. True, Sir ;

I own I thought myself unequal to it ;
Nor am I yet convinc'd : yet what I want in merit,
I will make out in rigour on the King.
In justice to the people and to Heaven.

Crom. Bradshaw,

Thou art the very finew of our cause ;
The spirit of design and warmth of zeal
Glow in thy purpose. I adore that man,
Who, once resolv'd, outflies e'en expedition.
Thou art the glory of our brotherhood !
And spare not to reproach, to taunt and blacken,
T' insult their party ; nay, the King himself :
Mindful that all his dignity is lost,
And he, for monstrous crime, brought forth to justice.
Seek an occasion too, to talk with Fairfax,
And urge to him the strong necessity
Of the King's death—Perhaps he may prove angry—
But do not thou regard it. The time presses ;
And thou hast liv'd too long to squander that.

Brad. Good Sir, farewell ! my love would offer more,
But my haste wrongs it. [Exit.]

Crom. Go too, Bradshaw.

Such are the tools with which the wife must work :
And yet he too is wise, and might cajole
A weaker than himself, and does.
He is my proper instrument
To operate on those below my notice.
Thus by comparison are all things known ;
And by such under-steps as him, and lower,
Do the ambitious mount to fame and honour.
Besides, I choose me those whom zeal inflames,
Who failing to convince you, will compel :
Such, prompted by enthusiasm's force,
And in predestination's armour cas'd,
Will to the mouth of danger plant their breasts,
And out-fight frenzy and despair. But lo !
Where Ireton comes !

Enter Ireton.

My trusty friend,
What look wears our design ?

Ire. Such as a bride,
The morning after bliss ; she smiles upon us,
And laughs at what she fear'd. Petitions call
For justice on the King—Our faction thrives ;
Murmur increases to a public outcry.
All are 'gainst Charles, save a few pitying hearts,
Who melt with Fairfax, and incline to mercy.

Crom. 'Tis well. Send post unto the army, Ireton,
And let those sums of money I have order'd,
Be secretly dispers'd among the soldiers ;
It will remind them of their promises :
Gold is specific for the memory.

O gold ! wer't not for thee, what great design,
What bold ambition, that outstretches justice,
Could have success ? Thou buy'st our very prayers :
Thou art the heart of opposition,
And the tooth of faction. Wer't not for thy aid,
Success would vary like the uncertain wind,
And honesty might prosper ! Hie thee, Ireton ;
I must to the King ; I have some bills to offer him,
Which for the life of Charles, Charles would not sign ;
And his refusal turns to our advantage.
Thou shalt know more hereafter—Now dispatch.

Ire. Good Sir, I fly.

[*Exit.*]

Crom. Ha ! who have we yonder ?
O ! 'tis the wife of Fairfax : once as hearty,
As zealous for the cause, as Cromwell's self,
And wrought her lord to think so. Now, O woman,
Such is thy varying nature, that the waves
Are not more fluctuating than thy opinions,
Nor sooner are displac'd. To her is owing
The wayward pity of her vassal lord.
Oh, 'tis certain danger to have such a woman,
Who, when man leaves himself to toy with her,
Knows how to win, and practise on his weakness.
But let me think—All women may be won.
The dame of Ephesus, the Anne of Richard,
Shew us a woman's grief and resolution.

Why

Why may not she be wrought up to my purpose,
I can approach in what they like, in flattery ?

Enter Lucy Fairfax.

Lady Fair. Stay, worthy Cromwell, and attend my
Hear me, and may thy answer be propitious, [prayer,
As this kind hour that favours my address.

O may my falling tears that plead for mercy,
Drop on thy heart, and melt it to compliance,
Nor disregard the suit because a woman's.

Cromwell is noble ; and the noble soul
Grants the most free indulgence to the weak,
Because its generous nature pleads their cause.

Crom. Such is a woman's weakness, that she thinks
T' impose on us, by what allure's herself :
But I must turn this project upon her,
And fairly put it to an equal proof,
Who best dissembles, Cromwell—or a woman. [Aside.
Lady, I must esteem a compliment,
When from a tongue that seldom errs that way.
From what I know, and what I oft have heard,
You can dress praise like truth : that praise I mean,
Which from our liking to the theme we speak of,
Swells to extravagance (tho' still our thoughts)
Such warmth is virtue's fault ; and such, I hope,
May be your kind excuse for praising me.

Lady Fair. Talk not of praise, good Sir, your merit
When from a woman's mouth. [shames it,

Crom. Well turn'd again. [Aside.
O lady, were I but to speak my thoughts
Of you, and your brave lord, you would conclude
'Twere praise indeed—for virtue looks within
For her faults only, not for her perfections.
Hear some of those : you once espous'd our cause,
E'en with persuasion's warmth ; and well you su'd.
We have not, sure, o'erlook'd desert so far
To merit opposition !
The state is busy—but the time will come
When her best office shall be pleasing you.

Lady Fair. You mock me, Sir ; I do not wish that
Vain as you think my sex. I came to say— [time,

Crom. E'en to that purpose, to the life of Charles.
It cannot be, the people cry for justice :

Would I could stop its course ! But, gentle lady,
Think it more wise to fly a falling pile,
Than strive to prop its ruin. Charles must die.

Lady Fair. O gracious Cromwell ! —

Crom. Nay, but hear me on.

Why will you thus employ your eloquence,
Which our whole council would with liking hear,
To help impossibilities ? Good lady,
Rather employ it (and you know the way)
To teach your lord to value rising fortune,
And make his fame —

Lady Fair. As black as yours will be.

Sha me on thy dark designs, and the whole cause,
If only such a deed can make it prosper.
Be the heart bloodless that conceives the act,
The tongue accurst that dares avow the purpose,
And the hand blasted that obeys the order !
May his life here be all the hell we think of,
Yet find a greater in the other world.

[Exit.]

Crom. How wayward and perverse a thing is woman !
How much unlike the softness we expect,
When rage and trifles vex 'em. In the heat
And the full vigour of their first enjoyment,
Distrust succeeds their love ; and he who pleases,
Is hunted by their jealousy to hate.—
Fairfax and Bradshaw earnest in dispute !
I will not interrupt them, but to Charles.

[Exit.]

Enter Fairfax and Bradshaw

Brad. Why all this heat, my Lord ; because I said
That Charles deserves to die ? Why, I repeat it :
And would you master this unmanly rage,
I might to reason prove it, but not frenzy.

Fair. Well, I am calm—Speak out your bloody pur-
What hell devises, and what Bradshaw thinks.

[pose,

Brad. Cast your eye backward then, and let us view
E'en the beginning of this Charles's reign ;
In the first year a raging plague destroy'd us,
And was prophetic of our woes to come :
Did it not sweep whole multitudes away
Fast as the sword, which Charles has since unsheathe'd ?
• Did he not follow still his father's steps,
• Retain his ministry, pursue his aims ?

• Would

• Would he, tho' pray'd and threaten'd by the parliament,
 • Give up those men, whose counsels had misled him?
 • And is not that prince weak—to say no more—
 • Who from a general outcry guards the man,
 • Whose bold ambition strikes at liberty,
 • At native freedom, and the subjects right?
Fair. You but this moment blam'd my warmth,
 And art thyself transported.

Brad. Grant I be:

• 'Tis in the cause that liberty approves,
 And every honest Englishman must own it;
 But to proceed—Those men he still held fast,
 Or parted with 'em, as the heart drops blood:
 • Witness the earl of Strafford: tax'd the land
 By grievous impositions; levy'd war
 Against the commons, and the kingdom's peace.
 But I forget me that I speak to Fairfax,
 Who has so often fought against his arms,
 And taught success to know the cause of right.

Fair. I fought for reparation of our wrongs—
 But cannot think that it consists in murder.
 I would not have him die.

Brad. By the good cause,
 It does portend some more than common change,
 When generals plead for mercy! Shame it hence,
 And let your visage wear the glow of rage;
 Let Prynne's undaunted soul inform thy breast,
 And drive weak pity thence.

Fair. I'll hear no more:
 Thy servile tongue may spare its hireling office,
 It roots my purpose firmer: In thy speech
 I read design, tho' oratory's flowers
 Strive to conceal the rancour of the heart.
 O Eloquence! thou violated fair,
 How art thou woo'd, and won to either bed
 Of right or wrong! O when Injustice folds thee,
 Dost thou not curse thy charms for pleasing him,
 And blush at conquest? But the juncture calls,
 Nor will I leave one moment unemploy'd,
 'Till the King's safety be confirm'd.

[Exit.

Brad. 'Tis well.

I must to other folk, here time is lost.

This man has step'd into the stream of mischief,
 Just like the boy, who tries the water's cold,
 And shrinking pulls his foot to land : men, like me,
 Plunge boldly in, and weather to their point. [Exit.

SCENE changes to the King's apartment.

Enter King and Bishop Juxon.

Juxon. Why does your highness seem so lost in thought?
 Consider not so deeply, good my Lord.

King. The purport of my dream this afternoon,
 Has set this visage on. I'll tell thee, Juxon—
 Finding my spirits faint, I laid me down,
 And courted sleep to ease me ; to my wish
 It quickly seiz'd my eye-lids, and methought
 (So fancy painted) former times return'd,
 Grandeur encircled me, and regal state ;
 My people's love flew round about my throne,
 On acclamation's wing ; 'twas glory all,
 And such a reign as Charles has pray'd for. Homage,
 The bond of friendship, and the oath of trust,
 Were all before me : straight the pleasing scene,
 Quick as the fearful eye can wink, was chang'd ;
 And in its room, a vast and dreary plain,
 Comfortless, wild, without inhabitant,
 Stretch'd out a dismal length that tir'd the eye ;
 I was about to go, —when kind Adversity
 Pull'd me behind, and as I turn'd around,
 Shew'd me where Innocence stood weeping by ;
 He whisper'd in my ear, that she alone
 Of all my boasting friends, had staid with me.
 The thought struck deep, I wak'd, and good my Lord,
 I found my weeping queen within my arms.

Enter Cromwell.

Crom. If I disturb you, Sir, I ask your pardon :
 Necessity will sometimes be importunate,
 And out-go compliment.

King. Your business, Sir ?

Crom. Know then, whatever may be thought of Crom-
 well,
 He pays this visit to approve his love,
 His fair design and honesty of heart
 To Charles — Solicitous to bring you good,
 Behold two bills, in tenor much the same

With those before presented ; I presume,
The eye in danger more distinctly sees,
Freed from security's thick film : These sign'd,
Rigour may break her sword, and concord join us.

King. Can the low peasant mount his thoughts with
The servile judge of all men by themselves. [kings ?
But know, mistaken man, the noble mind
Rises above distress ; and terms, perhaps,
Which in the day of power I might accept,
Must be refus'd in this : but these can never.
There is no good that equals the exchange
Of peaceful thoughts and an untainted mind.

Crom. Where were those thoughts in Charles's former
When to despotic sway you stretch'd your view, [days,
And would have pull'd up laws ? When to that end
You so caress'd your fav'rite Buckingham,
The tool of your designs. What were your thoughts
When from the fair impeachment of the public,
You shelter'd up that monster minister,
And hid him in the bosom of your fondness ? [speak'it ;

Juxon. Insolent Cromwell ! Know to whom thou
Think what a distance Heaven has set between you ;
And be your words as humble as your state.

Crom. Distance ! good bishop ! But I cry you mercy ?
For thus the clergy will still argue on,
Deny from pique, assert from prejudice ;
Shew us the lesson, seldom the example,
And preach up laws which they will ne'er obey :
But thou art trash below the note of Cromwell :
To thee I speak, protector of black Buckingham.
What must that monarch be, who lets one man
Ingross the offices of place and pow'r,
Who, with the purloin'd money of the state,
Buys popularity, and whose careless eye
Sees our fair trade destroy'd by corsair force,
And pirate violence : who merchandises trusts,
And highest posts—and whose unbounded pow'r
Does on his worthless kindred lavish titles ?

King. Were I the person that thy malice speaks,
I should deserve this treatment. Thy base charg
Strikes at my honesty as King and man,
And forces me to answer. Well I know,

That

That for my actions here, to Heav'n alone
 I stand accountable ; yet stooping thus,
 (Low as to thee) I thus avow my justice ;
 Have I not still maintain'd the subjects rights,
 Preserv'd religion pure ; nay, struggled for it,
 E'en to this hour, the witness of thy insolence ?
 What would your faction have ? If monarchy ;
 Must I not govern by the acts of state ?
 I am a monarch else without a council.
 Would you reduce the state to anarchy ?
 You are a council then without a pow'r.

Crom. You feel our power (as lightly as you term it.)

King. Such as a robber's, by surprise and force :
 Where is your right from Heav'n ?

Crom. Power !

The right of nature and the free-born man.

King. Leave me.

Crom. You speak as if you still were king.

King. If not : what am I then ?

Crom. Charles Stuart, nothing more.

King. Well may the servile herd insult and threaten,
 When they behold the lion in the toils.

Crom. You may complain as much as suits your will,
 You've still that comfort left—So fare you well. [Exit.

Juxon. Thus is good Fortune treated by the base :
 O did she know how much they shame her favours,
 She would confer 'em only on the great !
 Be cheerful, Sir ; he is not worth a thought.

King. O Juxon ! think what majesty must feel,
 Who bears an insult from a subject tongue :
 But let him hence—I am compos'd again,
 And for the worst prepar'd. All-gracious Heav'n !
 You gave me power, and you may take it back ;
 You gave me life, and may reclaim the gift ;
 That as you please—But spare this luckless land,
 And save it from misfortune's rugged hand !
 My ev'ry wish is for its joys increase,
 And my last pray'r shall be my people's peace. [Exeunt.

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

Enter King Charles, the Queen and Lady Fairfax.

QUEEN.

IS it like love thus to persuade me hence?
Is it like love, alas! in me to go?
Can she be faithful to her luckless Lord,
Who will be absent in affliction's hour?
Is it not then the lenient hand of love
Proves its best office? Then the virtuous wife
Shines in the full meridian of her truth,
And claims her part of sorrow: O, my Lord,
Have I been so unthrifty of thy joy,
That you deny me to partake your woe?

King. No, my best Queen—You wrong my heart's
'Tis not my wish advises—but my fear, [design.
My fears for thee, the tenderest part of Charles;
When thou art safe beyond their barbarous pow'r,
I cannot feel misfortune.

Queen. But I shall,
More than to share e'en death with thee:—
My sorrows will be doubled if I go:—
The pangs of separation must be great,
And my conceit of what my Charles may feel
Exceed reality—O let me stay—
I was prepar'd to suffer all things with you,
But not the shock of parting.

Lady Fair. Welcomie tears!
Who that have virtue can behold this scene,
And not be actors in it?

King. Now 'tis past.
I would have sooner spoke, but pow'rful Nature
First claim'd my tears, ere she would lend me words:
It must not be, my love; thy pray'r to stay
(The growing proof of thy eternal love)
Argues against thee to my tender heart,
And forces thee away: this worthy Lady
Has found the means, and made the generous offer,
Her care prepares your flight: the present hour

That

That forces me before their black tribunal,
Will hold all eyes regardless of your steps,
And make security thy guide :—farewel ;
'Till we shall meet again, thy dear idea
Shall in my waking fancy still revive,
And fill up every dream.

Queen. My dearest Lord,
Can you so easily pronounce—farewel,
When that farewel may be perhaps—for ever ?
O can you leave me thus ?—
Methinks our parting should affect the world,
And nature sympathize with griefs like ours—
O let me stay, at least, till this black day
Be past, that I may know the worst.
To be in doubt is worse than to be certain ;
My apprehension will increase my woe,
And bring the blackest scenes of death before me.

King. No more, my queen ! that were to risk thy fate—
And make me more unhappy in thy danger : [ty,
Farewel.

Queen. O, yet a little longer !
Each moment now is worth an age before.
Thou never-resting time ! 'tis only now
I count thy value. O, my dearest Lord !
Who could believe when first we met in love,
That we should know a parting worse than death ?
Do not go yet.

King. Heav'n knows I would not go—
But dire necessity must be obey'd :
And see where he appears in his worst form.
Keep in thy tears, my love, lest he suspect—
And teach thy heart to say farewel at once.

Enter Colonel Tomlinson.

Tom. My Lord, I have orders to attend your Majesty
To Westminster.

King. A moment spent in private,
And I am ready. [Exit. Toml.
Do not droop, my queen,
Exert the strongest vigour of thy soul,
Call up thy piety, thy aweful virtue,
Thy resolution, and thy sex's pride,
And take their friendly counsel ; they will soon

Determine you to think of Charles, as one
 Beyond the power of faction in this world,
 And ready for another—Fare thee well ;
 I have this compliment to pay thy worth,
 That now I leave thee with more tender thoughts
 Than first I met thy love—this tear—adieu !

Now, Sir, lead on. [To Col. Toml. entering.

Queen. O stay ; my dearest Lord !

[*Exeunt King and Col. Toml.*]

Let me assure thee of my faith and love—

Witness thou aweful Ruler of the world,
 How much I feel in parting—how my heart
 Labours to break to prove its constancy ;
 How my affection still has call'd thee dear ;
 Never unkind, 'till in this parting moment.

What do I say ? Alas ! my Charles is gone—

Fancy presented him before my eyes,
 And my tears wrong'd my sight—he's gone for ever.

Lady Fair. Good Madam, think your safety calls upon
 Your very sorrows are not here secure ; [you ;
 Tho' you neglect your own, yet think his ease,
 The ease of Charles, depends upon your flight ;
 I have provided every proper means,
 They wait your will.—

Queen. Kind Lady, I will go—

But Oh, be just to nature, and to pity,
 And own 'tis hard—I thank your friendly tears,
 They speak my meaning—but I weary you.—
 The wretch who feels misfortunes will complain,
 And I have won'drous reason—O, my Charles !
 Since I must go, may every adverse star
 Dart on my wand'ring head, and leave thy sky
 Deck'd with propitious planets only.—May thy life,
 Clear as thy innocence, adorn the world,
 And be the theme of wonder.—O my heart ! [*Exeunt.*
Enter Marquis of Lindsey, meeting the Duke of Richmond.

Lind. Saw you the King pass by ?

Rich. I did, my Lord :

As to his coronation, not his trial :
 Such was his look—such aweful majesty
 Beam'd out on every side, and struck the gazer.
 No mark of sorrow furrow'd up his face,

Nor stopp'd his smiles to his saluting friends ;
 Clear as his conscience was his visage seen,
 The emblem of his heart. As I approach'd,
 Richmond, said he, commend me to my friends ;
 Say, tho' my pow'r is gone, my wishes reach 'em,
 And ev'ry prayer that rises, breathes their welfare.
 'Tis not in faction to subdue the spirit,
 Or break the noble mind : his speaking eyes
 Repeated his commands, and pierc'd my heart :
 E'en the base rabble — licens'd to insult,
 Struck with the dignity of kingly awe,
 Forgot their hire, and rose from praise to wonder.

Lind. Will you not follow, Sir ? 'twere worth remark,
 How he deports himself.

Rich. O fear not Charles :

Let him encounter with a host of kings,
 And he shall stand the shock without a terror :
 Will he then shrink beneath a subject-brow,
 Tho' wrinkled with rebellion ? — No, good Lindsey,
 The lion cannot lose his kingly nature,
 The sun its heat, nor Charles his noble firmness ;
 Perhaps indeed, his generous heart may feel,
 Not for himself, but for his tyrant judges ;
 He may lament deprav'd humanity,
 And blush to be mistaken in his people.
 See, what a mournful visage Fairfax wears,
 The sun of pleasantry eclips'd by thought :
 Now judgment combats inadvertency,
 And makes him curse success — but thus 'tis ever
 When courage wildly starts out by itself,
 Nor asks confederation's friendly aid ;
 Confusion joins him ; then he wanders thro'
 The thicket Doubt, the maze Perplexity,
 And finds at last Repentance.

Enter Fairfax.

Fair. Now the scene

Of bloodiest purpose is on foot, and acting ;
 Now Murder mounts the bench, array'd like Justice,
 And points the sword at Charles — ill-fated man !
 Ha ! who are those ? The friends of Cromwell's faction ?
 No, they are with their huntsmen on the scent

Of royal blood, uncoupled for destruction,—
If sorrow blinds me not—the duke of Richmond.

Rich. Good Sir, how fare you?

Fair. Wond'rous ill, my Lord.

Could I but tell you what I feel,—yet live,
You would conclude me danger-proof—O, Sir!
Reflection shews me the vast tract I've past,
And stern Impossibility denies
One step return—yet (be my witness Heav'n)
This dreadful day was never in my wish.

Rich. We do not think it was. But, gentle Lord,
Think of some means to ward this fatal blow,
And save the King. Would you but go, my Lord,
Your struggle might—

Fair. Alas! what can I do?

Was ever army routed by one man?
I have an army there to combat with.
Should I go there in order for prevention,
Failing, my presence would be made consent,
And I still more unhappy. O the change!
This is the curse of independent pow'r,
For presbytery never meant it. Yet, my Lords,
You shall not say, that Fairfax only talks;
He will approve his honesty by deeds;
Somewhat he will attempt to save his honour,
And clear it to the view of future times.

Rich. We do not doubt you will, nor yet your power.
My Lord, farewell. [Exeunt Rich. and Lind.

Fair. My pow'r!—say, what is pow'r?
The vain extent of title and of land;
The barbarous impulse to the insulting wretch,
To use his fellow-creature like a slave;
The woman's idol, and the man's misfortune,
As it too often robs him of humanity.
This is the worst degree—behold the best,
And now 'tis lovely; the redress of wrongs,
Hunger's repast, and the large draught of thirst,
The poor man's riches, and the rich man's wealth,
When thus apply'd—The means to stop the death,
The death of Charles—This is my wish for pow'r.

[Exit.

SCENE draws, and discovers the High-Court.

King, Bradshaw, Cromwell, Ireton, &c.

King. Sir, were my person all the danger here,
I should not think it worth the pain of speech ;
Your charge 'gainst me is of the smallest force,
But 'tis my people's liberties I prize,
At which, through me you strike : impeachments run
In the King's name, and therefore cannot lie
Against the King himself ; what earthly pow'r
Can justly call me to account ? By what law
Have you erected this pretended court ? —
The house of commons ? — Say, is that alone
A court of judicature ? Where are the lords
To lend their aid ? the King to sit supreme,
And pass the nation's laws ? Are these your means
To bring the King to meet his parliament ?
To force him hither like a criminal ?
I lately did require, and press'd it warmly,
Stoop'd almost to intreaty, to be heard
Before both houses in the painted-chamber ;
I told you what I had to offer there
Concern'd the kingdom's safety more than mine :
I was refus'd — Is this your boasted justice ?
Consider of it yet — and hear your King ;
If you do not, remember where it lies,
The weight of this day's guilt ; if you refuse,
Do as you please — I have no more to say.

Brad. The court has something then to say to you,
Which, though it may not please you, must be spoke :
You have been charg'd with tyranny and murder,
With levying arms against the commonwealth,
And joining in rebellion 'gainst the people.

King. Sir, give me leave to speak, ere sentence passes,
Against those imputations —

Brad. By your favour,
Your time is past, and sentence now approaching.

King. Am I not to be heard ?

Brad. 'Tis now too late ;
You have disown'd us for a court of justice ;
We have too long been trifled with already ;
And must proceed — Attend your sentence, Sir :

The commons, in behalf of the whole people,
 Have constituted this high-court of justice,
 To try Charles Stuart, lately king of England.
 He has thrice heard his charge, and thrice deny'd
 The pow'r and jurisdiction of the court ;
 For which contempt, and proof of his high crimes,
 It does pronounce him tyrant, traitor, murderer,
 Adjudging him to death, by severing
 His head and body—This is the joint act,
 The sentence, judgment, and the resolution
 Of the whole court.

[*The whole court rises in token of their assent.*

King. Will you hear me, Sir ?

Brad. Not after sentence.

King. No, Sir ?

Brad. It is too late. Withdraw your prisoner.

King. ' May I not speak ?—I may, Sir, after sentence.

• Your favour, Sir, I may, Sir, after sentence.

• *Brad.* Adjourn the court.

[*The King is brought forward ; the Scene closes.*

King. Deny'd to speak !—Why have I lived to this ?

When I had power, the meanest of my subjects,
 Not heard by me, would straight arraign my justice,
 And brand me with the hated name of tyrant.

Will future ages, looking back to this,

Credit the record ? They will rather deem it

The black invective of a partial pen,

And curse his memory that libell'd England.

Sir, I am ready to attend your will,

Do your worst office ; if 'tis your commission,

Then lead me down this instant to the block ;

'Twill be a joyful hearing, for believe me

I would not live in longer fellowship

With men, whom my best thoughts must call ungrateful.

Tom. Sir, my commands are to attend you back ;
 I have no more in charge.

King. I follow you.

[*As he goes out, Fairfax enters.*

Fair. Sir, let me trespass for a word or two,
 Ere you remove your prisoner.

[*To Tomlinson.*

Tom. I obey, Sir.

King. Your pleasure, Sir ? If you come here t'insult,

Spare not the taunt, nor the opprobrious smile :
 I have to-day already borne so much,
 That an addition will be scarcely felt.

Fair. Wrong me not so ; I bear a fairer purpose :
 My heart, detesting this accursed day,
 Comes to approve its honesty to Charles :
 If I have often fought against thy arms,
 My conscience dictated, and not my hate ;
 Acquit me to thyself of this last act,
 And judge the former as you please.

King. Good Fairfax,
 The present times are liable to error,
 I am a fatal instance ; then forgive me.
 I had forgot how lately I had cause
 To think you now no enemy to Charles ;
 But sorrow forc'd down her lethargic draught,
 Which had clos'd up the eye of memory.

Fair. Ill-fated prince ! how does thy firmness shine,
 And make affliction glorious : Oh, 'tis thus,
 The truly great exert their resolution,
 And make calamity a virtue : Cromwell now
 Loses the barb'rous joy of his design,
 To see misfortune's arrow fail to pierce thee.

King. Believe me, Fairfax, 'tis not innate firmness,
 The daine morality, the Stoic patience,
 That furnish true serenity of mind :
 I had try'd all these helps, but prov'd 'em weak,
 And found the best philosophy in virtue.
 Can the fond teacher's lesson, conn'd by rote,
 Change the dark lodging of the murderer's breast,
 To the sun-lighted rooms of innocence ? Oh, no !
 As to the agents of my present fate,
 I look upon them with the eye of thanks ;
 Who from this life of sorrow wing my parting,
 And send me sooner to an happier throne.

Fair. Such resignation wears the noble mind,
 And triumphs over death : but, gentle Charles !
 Think not of death so soon, live long and happy
 Fairfax will try his utmost stretch of power,
 But you shall live, though this black day has happen'd ;
 Persuasion, pray'r, and force, shall all be us'd,
 To make my promise good.

King.

King. Good Fairfax, hear me ;
 Nor indiscreetly throw thyself away,
 To save the man whose wishes are to die.
 I had remov'd my thoughts from earth, and now
 'Twill be such pain to call 'em back again —
 Life is not worth the trouble : yet I thank thee.

Fair. This was but half my purpose : hear me on —
 If in the hurry of intemp'rate zeal,
 I have outgone the justice of the cause,
 And, erring in my judgment, fought in wrong,
 Let this intreaty win thee to a pardon.

King. If to have my forgiveness, makes thee clear,
 Thou art as white as virtue.

Fair. Glorious Charles !
 But I will hasten to preserve his life,
 And make my gratitude my thanks ; farewell !
 It is the common interest of mankind
 To let him live, to shine out an example.

King. Who dresses in good fortune's gorgeous ermine,
 Looks not so comely to a virtuous eye,
 As he who clothes him in repentant black.
 I tire your patience. Come, Sir, lead the way ;
 Lighter than fancy does my bosom feel,
 My thoughts are mercy, and my quiet conscience
 Tranquility's still calm ; no anxious fear
 Beats in my pulse, or ruffles me with care :
 If the bare hope of immortality
 Knows peace like this, what must the full enjoyme
 be ?

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

Fairfax *solvus.*

WHY did I conquer — to repent of conquest ?
 Who, though I fought for liberty alone,
 Will yet acquit me of the guilt that follows ?
 Will future ages, when they read my page,
 (Though Charles himself absolves me of the deed)
 Spare me the name of regicide ? Oh, no !
 I shall be blacken'd with my party's crimes,

And damn'd with my full share, though innocent.
 In vain then 'gainst oppression have I warr'd,
 In vain for liberty uprear'd the sword ;
 Posterity's black curse shall brand my name,
 And make me live in infamy for ever.
 Now, valour, break thy sword, thy standard victory,
 Furl up thy ensigns, bold hostility,
 And sink into inaction : since, alas !
 One tainted heart, or one ambitious brain
 Can turn the current of the noblest purpose,
 And spoil the trophies of an age's war.
 But see where, to my wish, stern Cromwell comes ;
 Now urge him strongly for the life of Charles,
 And, if intreaty fails, avow thy purpose.

Enter Cromwell.

Crom. Fairfax in thought ! My noble Lord, good day.

Fair. To make it good, let Cromwell grant my prayer,
 So mercy and the sun shall shine together.

Crom. Still on this paltry subject ! Fairfax, why,
 Why will you wrong intreaty by this cause ?
 Fairfax is wise, and should not ask of Cromwell
 To grant what justice stops ; yours are not years
 When childhood prattles, or when dotage mopes : —
 Pardon the expression.

Fair. I forgive you all,
 All you can think, but rigour to the King.

Crom. Pr'ythee no more : this mercy that you pray for,
 As ill becomes the tongue, as my severity ;
 Nay, worse. Would you obstruct the law
 In its due office ; nor permit the axe
 To fall upon offenders, such as Charles ?
 Would you see tyranny again arise,
 And spread in its foundation ? Let us then
 Seize on our general, Liberty, who still
 Has in the front of battle fought our cause,
 And led us on to conquest ; let us bind him
 In the strong chains of rough prerogative,
 And throw him helpless at the feet of Charles :
 He will absolve us then, and praise our folly.

Fair. This is a sophistry too weak for reason :
 You would excuse the guilt of Charles's death,
 By shewing me the opposite extreme ;

But

But can you find no mean, no middle course,
Steering between the danger of the last,
And horror of the first? I know you can.

Crom. It is not to be done: would Fairfax now,
When he has labour'd up the steep ascent,
And wasted time and spirits; would he now,
When but one step exalts him to the summit,
Where to his eye the fair horizon stretches,
And ev'ry prospect greatness can command;
Would he now stop, let go his fearful hold,
And tumble from the height?

Fair. I aim at none;
Damn'd be all greatness that depraves the heart,
Or calls one blush from honesty—no more—
I shall grow warm to be thus trifled with:
Think better, Cromwell—I have given my promise
That Charles shall live.

Crom. A promise may be broke;
Nay, start not at it—'Tis an hourly practice;
The trader breaks it—yet is counted honest;
The courtier keeps it not—yet keeps his honour;
Husband and wife in marriage promise much,
Yet follow sep'rate pleasures, and are—virtuous.
The churchmen promise too, but wisely, they
To a long payment stretch the crafty bill,
And draw upon futurity: a promise!
'Tis the wise man's freedom, and the fool's restraint;
‘ It is the ship in which the knave embarks,
‘ Who rigs it with the tackle of his conscience,
‘ And fails with ev'ry wind: regard it not.’

Fair. Can Cromwell think so basely as he speaks?
It is impossible, he does but try
How well fair speech becomes a vicious cause,
But, I hope, scorns it in the richest dress.
Yet hear me on, it is our interest speaks,
And bids us spare his life; while that continues,
No other title can annoy our cause,
And him we have secure; but grant him dead,
Another claim starts up, another king,
Out of our reach—this bloody deed perhaps
May rouse the princes of the continent,
(Who think their persons struck at in this blow)
To shake the very safety of our cause.

Crom. When you consult our int'rest, speak with free-
It is the turn and point of all design. [dom ;
But take this answer, Fairfax, in return ;
Britain, the queen of isles, our fair possession,
Secur'd by nature, laughs at foreign force ;
Her ships her bulwark, and the sea her dike,
Sees plenty in her lap, and braves the world.
Be therefore satisfy'd ; for Charles must die.

Fair. Wilt thou be heard, tho' at thy utmost need,
Who now art deaf to mercy and to pray'r ?
Oh, curs'd Ambition, thou devouring bird,
How dost thou from the field of honesty
Pick ev'ry grain of profit and delight,
And mock the reaper, Virtue ! Bloody man !
Know that I still have pow'r, have still the means
To make that certain which I stoop to ask ;
And fix myself against thy black design,
And tell thee, dauntless, that he shall not die.

Crom. Will Fairfax turn a rebel to the cause,
And shame his glories ?

Fair. I abjure the name ;
I know no rebel on the side of virtue.
This I am sure of, he that acts unjustly,
Is the worst rebel to himself ; and tho' now
Ambition's trumpet and the drum of pow'r
May drown the sound, yet conscience will, one day,
Speak loudly to him, and repeat that name.

Crom. You talk as 'twere a murder, not a justice.
Have we not brought him to an open trial ?
Does not the general cry pronounce his death ?
Come, Fairfax dares not.

Fair. By yon Heav'n, I will —
I know thee resolute ; but so is Fairfax.
You see my purpose, and shall find I dare. [Going.

Crom. Fairfax, yet stay. I would extend my pow'r
To its full stretch, to satisfy your wish ;
Yet would not have you think that I should grant
That to your threats, which I deny'd your pray'r —
Judge not so meanly of yourself and me.
Be calm, and hear me — What is human nature,
When the intemperate heat of passion blinds
The eye of reason, and commits her guidance

To headlong rashness? He directs her steps
 Wide of success to error's pathless way;
 And disappointments wild; yet such we are,
 So frail our being, that our judgment reaches
 Scarce farther than our sight—Let us retire,
 And, in this great affair, intreat his aid,
 Who only can direct to certainty.

There is I know not what, of good presage,
 That dawns within, and lights to happy issue.

Fair. If Heav'n and you consider it alike,
 It must be happy.

Crom. An hour or two of pray'r
 Will pull down favour upon Charles and us.

Fair. I am contented; but am still resolv'd
 That Charles shall live—I shall expect your answer
 With the impatience of desiring lovers,
 Who swell a moment's absence to an age. [Exit.

Crom. This was a danger quite beyond my view,
 Which only this expedient could prevent.
 Fairfax is weak in judgment; but so brave,
 That, set determination by his side,
 And he ascends the mountain top of peril.
 Now time is gain'd to ward against his pow'r,
 Which must be quickly thought on—To my wish—

Enter Ireton.

Ire. I but this instant met the general, Fairfax,
 Who told me his intreaty had prevail'd
 To save the life of Charles—'Tis more than wonder—

Crom. Ireton, thy presence never was more timely.
 I would disclose; but now each moment's loss,
 Is more than the neglect of future years.
 Hie thee in person to St James's, Ireton,
 And warn the officer, whose charge leads forth
 The King to execution, to be sudden:
 Let him be more than punctual to the time;
 If his respect to us forerun his warrant,
 It shall win greatness for him; so inform him—
 That done, repair o'th' instant to the army,
 And see a chosen party march directly,
 (Such as can well be trusted) post them, Ireton,
 Around the scaffold—My best kinsman, fly.

[Exit Ireton.
 Why

Why, now, I think I have secur'd my point ;
 I set out in the current of the tide,
 And not one wind that blows around the compass,
 But drives me to success. Ambition, now,
 Soars to its darling height, and, eagle-like,
 Looks at the sun of pow'r, enjoys its blaze,
 And grows familiar with the brightnes ; now I see
 Dominion nigh ; Superiority
 Beckons and points me to the chair of state ;
 There Grandeur robes me. Now let Cromwell boast
 That he has reft the crown from Charles's brow,
 To make it blaze more awful on his own. [Exit.]

SCENE, *the King discovered on a couch.*

King. Kind Sleep, farewell !
 Thou hast been loyal in the nightly care,
 And always smooth'd my pillow : at our parting,
 As to a faithful friend, I say, farewell,
 And thank thee for thy service. Here's another,

Enter Bishop Juxon.

Whose better care gives quiet to the mind ;
 Who gives the rich opiate of content,
 That makes us sleep in hope, and wake to mercy ;
 Him too, the bankrupt Charles can only pay
 As he has done the former ; no return,
 But the poor gratitude of thanks, warm from the heart.
 Say, my good Lord, have you so soften'd rigour,
 That I may see my children ere I die ?

Jux. It is permitted, Sir ; they wait without ;
 I would not let them enter, till I knew
 You were prepar'd, and ready for the interview.

[Exit Juxon.]

King. Good Juxon, lead them hither. Now the father,
 Spite of my firmness, steals into my eye,
 And melts my manhood. Heart, thou hast no temper
 Proof against nature, speaking in a child !

Enter Bishop Juxon, James, Glo'ster, and Elizabeth.
James. My royal father !

King. Good Juxon, make them rise ;
 For if I look that way I shall kneel too,
 And join with them in tears. A chair, good Juxon.

[Juxon brings a chair forward, and raises the children.]

Come

KING CHARLES I.

47

Come hither, James; nay, do not weep, my boy;
Keep thy eyes bright to look on better times.

James. I will command my nature if I can,
And stop these tears of sorrow; for, indeed,
They drown my sight; and I would view thee well,
Copy my royal father in his death,
And be the son of his heroic virtues.

King. Thou art the child of duty; hear me, James,
And lay up this last lesson in thy heart:
When I am dead, look on thy brother Charles
Not as thy brother only, but thy king;
Pay him fraternal love, and subject duty;
Nor let ambition, or the thirst to reign,
Poison thy firm allegiance. When thou seest him,
Bear him my blessing; and this last advice:
If Heav'n restores him to his lawful crown,
Let him wreak no revenge upon his foes,
But think it his best conquest to forgive;
With kindness let him treat Success, so shall she be
A constant guest; his promise, when once given,
Let no advantage break; nor any view
Make him give up his honesty to reach it:
Let him maintain his pow'r, but not increase it;
The string, prerogative, when strain'd too high,
Cracks like the tortur'd chord of harmony,
And spoils the concert between king and subject:
‘ Let him regard his people more than ministers,
‘ Whose interest or ambition may mislead him.’
These rules observ'd, may make him a good prince,
And happier than his father—Wilt thou, James,
Remember this?

James. Oh, doubt not, royal Sir!
Can what my father says escape my memory;
And at a time when he shall speak no more?

King. Come to my arms, my boy.

James. Would I could weep the blood that warms my
For water wrongs my sorrow. [heart;

King. My dear Elizabeth,
Draw near, and take thy dying father's blessing.
Say to thy mother, (if thou e'er shalt see her)
That my thoughts never wander'd from her; that my
Holds her as dear, ev'n in this hour of death, [heart
As

As when my eyes first languish'd on her beauties ;
 Tell her, that Charles is only gone before
 T' inherit an immortal crown, and share it with her.
 Farewel, Elizabeth ; and let thy love
 And thy obedience wait thy brother Charles.

Eliz. Alas, my father, I but now have found
 A passage for my words, and yet you say,
 Farewel, already !

King. Come, my little Glo'ster,
 Come to my arms, and let me kiss thy cheek.

Glo'ster. Alas, my Lord, tis cold and wet with tears !
 I'll wipe it dry, and warm it with my hand,
 That it may meet your kindness as it ought.

King. Glo'ster, when I am dead, your brother Charles
 Is then your King and master—Love and obey him.
 These men who shall cut off thy father's head,
 When I am dead, perhaps, may make thee King ;
 But do not thou, I charge thee, on my blessing,
 Accept the crown while thy two brothers live ;
 Consider, Glo'ster, they were born before thee,
 And have an elder title—Wilt thou, Glo'ster ?

Glo'ster. A King ! No, they shall tear me first in pieces.

King. Oh, Nature, Nature, do not strike so deeply !
 This scene is worse than death—I am ready, Sir.

[Tomlinson at the door.

James. Oh, Sir !

Eliz. My Lord !

Glo'ster. My father !

King. Oh !

Glo'ster. I cannot part from you, my dearest father.
 Would not those bloody men that cut your head off,
 If I should beg it, cut off mine ?

King. Heart, thou art marble, not to break at this—
 Yet I must go ; for dire necessity
 Has struggled long with my paternal fondness,
 And has at length prevail'd. Farewel, at once.

[Going, returns.

I thought I had taken my last leave of them ;
 But find that nature calls me back again,
 And asks another look, another parting kiss.
 Be virtuous, and be happy.

Glo'ster. Oh, my poor father !—

[They are led off.

King.

King. So, now 'tis over—Let thy friendly aid,
 Good Juxon, bear me company to death—
 Now, Sir, lead on ; ere long I hope to see
 A world more glorious ; where no discord lives,
 Nor error rises, and no faction thrives :
 There the unfetter'd mind perfection knows,
 And looks with pity upon human woes.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Duke of Richmond, and Marquis of Lindsey.

Rich. Oh, fatal day ! now horror is on foot
 In her worst garb, and stern calamity
 Can do no more to England : Charles's sun
 Sets in his blood, and blushes for his people.

Lind. What aweful majesty his visage bears,
 Nor deigns the tribute of one sorrowing look,
 To grace misfortune !

Rich. Look where Fairfax comes ;
 His motion wild, and his distemper'd eye
 Shoots fire around, and speaks some strange emotion.

Enter Fairfax.

Fair. Curs'd be the villain's arts, and every wile
 That wrought me to believe him : Oh, Credulity,
 Thou hast as many ears as Fame has tongues,
 Open to every sound of truth and falsehood !
 'Tis now too late, impossible to save him :
 Fool that I was, I knew him for a villain,
 Yet trusted to him, to the monster Cromwell.

Rich. Fairfax, the world acquits thee of the deed ;
 Thy pow'r has labour'd strongly for his safety :
 Behold where Juxon, the good bishop, comes,
 Return'd from his last service to his master.

Fair. I will not stay to hear the sad relation.
 But think on my revenge on Cromwell ;
 May the mercy which he deny'd to Charles's mortal part,
 Ne'er light upon his soul, though at his last intreaty.

Enter Juxon.

Rich. Charles is at peace.

Juxon. He is, my gentle Lord ;
 And may we all meet death with equal firmness !
 Patience fate by him in an angel's garb,
 And held out a full bowl of rich content,
 Of which he largely quaff'd : then came Charity,
 And in behalf of Charles, with hasty hand,

Dealt round forgiveness to the world : his pray'r
Was for his foes more earnest than himself,
Because their wants were greater. Thus fell Charles—
A monument of shame to the present age,
A warning to the future. His example
May prove this maxim's truth to all mankind ;
The subject's reverence, and the prince's love,
Grasping and grasp'd, walk hand in hand together,
Strengthen'd by union : then the king's command
Is lost in the obedience of the subject :
The king, unask'd, confirms the people's rights,
And by the willing gift prevents the claim.
These are the virtues that endear a king,
Adorn a people, and true greatness bring.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.

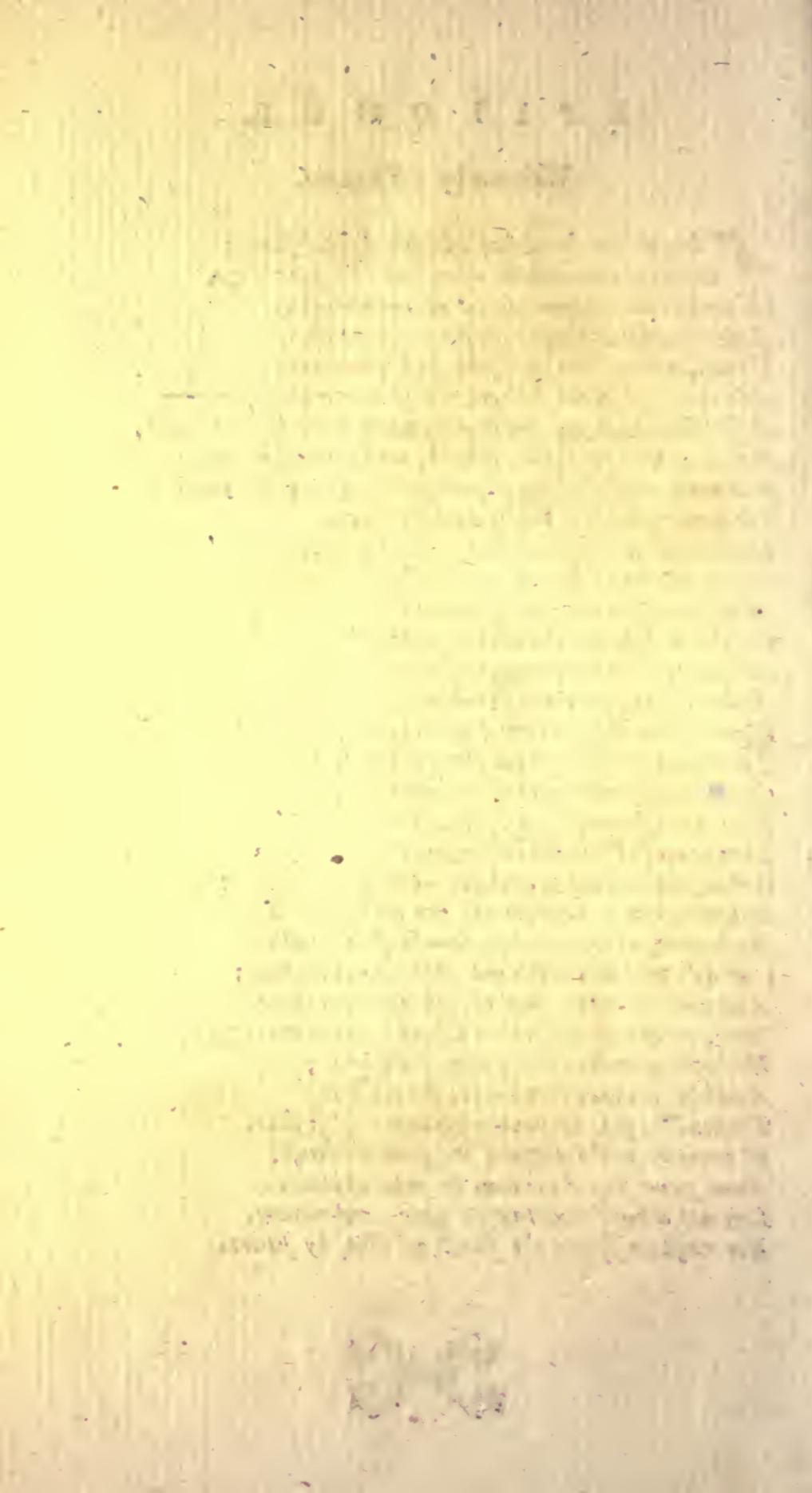


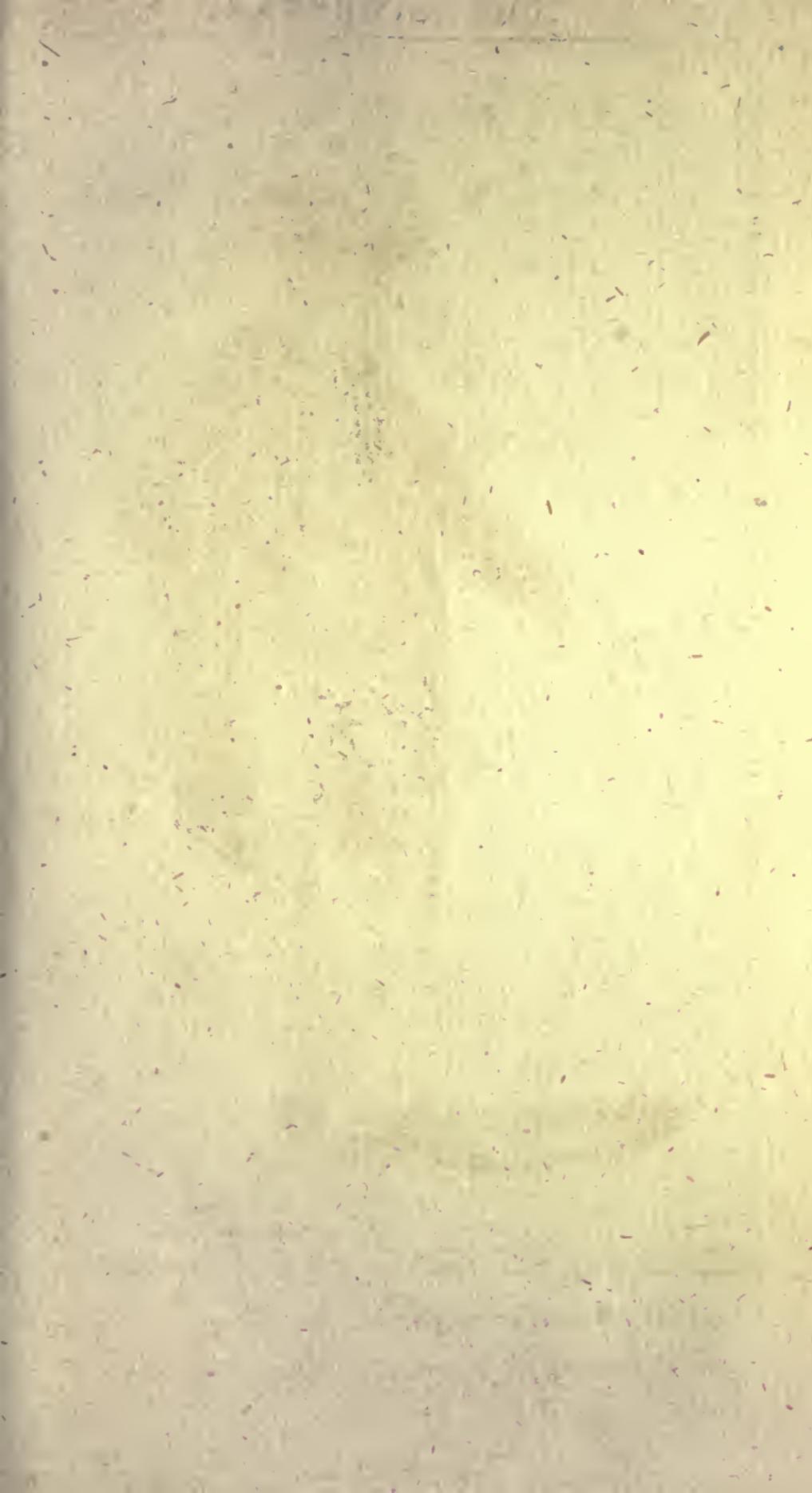
E P I L O G U E.

Written by a FRIEND.

*AT length our bard has told his dismal story ;
He thinks—without offence to Whig or Tory,
He writes not from a spirit of contention ;
And only on third night expects—his pension.*
*Ladies, when civil dudgeon first grew high,
And the good folks fell out—they knew not why—
A stubborn race, no doubt on't, were those Round-heads,
Rebels at once to female power, and crown'd-heads :
But now, bless'd change ! our heroes give their votes
For government of kings, and petticoats.*
*Had we then liv'd—What crowds of volunteers !
Down with the Rump, and high for Cavaliers !
In those prim times, our grandmothers of yore,
Preferr'd a pray'r-book to a matadore :
At court, each turtle only lov'd her mate,
And no intrigues went on—but those of state.
What odious Satique law ('twas none of nature)
Excludes us women from the legislature ?
Could we assemble once in convocation,
How purely would we settle all the nation !
Lovers and op'ras should employ our cares,
Cards, masquerades, and such-like state-affairs :
Debates, like a male-senate, we could handle ;
And move, as well as they, to—snuff a candle :
Our ay's and no's with one shrill voice declare ;
And none be mutes, but all, all speakers there.
Now, on our stage, while Charles once more is try'd,
He hopes none here can prove a regicide ;
A milder sentence to receive, his trust is,
Tremendous pit, in your high court of justice.
If bravely you'd support the good old cause,
Atone your fathers crimes by your applause ;
Lay not a harb'rous tax on your good-nature,
Nor raise in spleen the funds of wit, by satire.*









MR. PALMER in the Character of STURELL:
"But here he comes! — I must dissemble?"

BELL'S EDITION.



T H E

G A M E S T E R.

A TRAGEDY.

As written by Mr. MOORE,

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE

VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

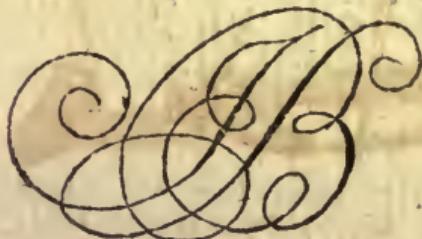
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book.

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS.

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCCLXXVII.

TO THE
 RIGHT HONOURABLE
 HENRY PELHAM.

SIR,

IT was a very fine piece of oratory of a young lawyer at the bar, who, as council against a highwayman, observed that the prosecutor had been robbed of a certain quantity of ore, which being purified by fire, cut into circular pieces, and impressed with the image of a king and the arms of a state, brought with it the necessaries, the conveniences, and the luxuries of life. I'll be hanged, says an honest country gentleman who was standing by, if this flourishing fool does not mean money. But if he had said it in one word, would not all the rest have been implied?

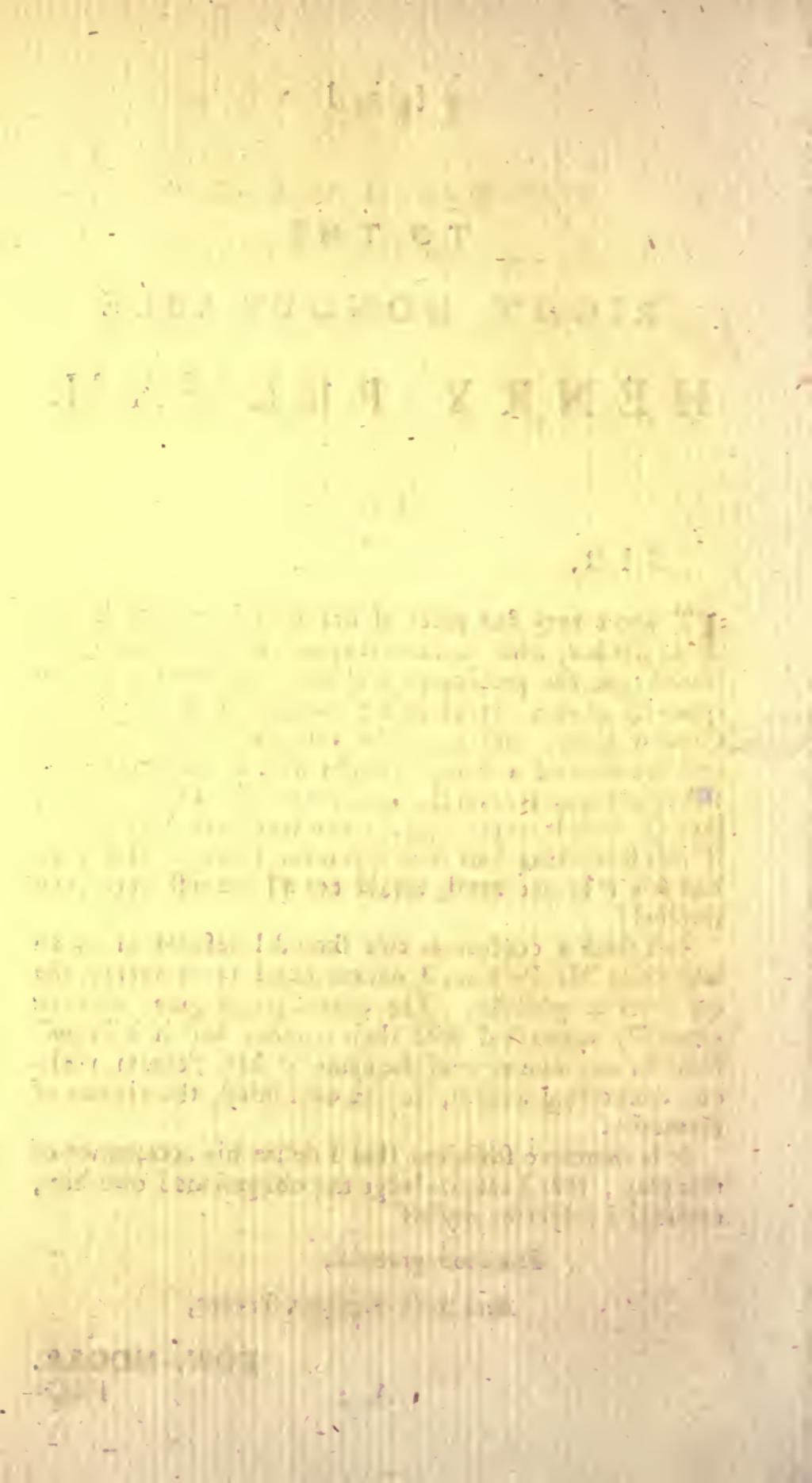
Just such a censure as this should I deserve, if in an address to Mr. Pelham, I endeavoured to enumerate the qualities he possesses. The characters of great men are generally connected with their names; and it is impossible for any one to read the name of Mr. Pelham, without connecting with it, in his own mind, the virtues of humanity.

It is therefore sufficient that I desire his acceptance of this play; that I acknowledge the obligations I owe him, and that I subscribe myself

His most grateful,

And most obedient servant,

EDW. MOORE.
 PRO-



P R O L O G U E.

Written and spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

LIKE fam'd La Mancha's knight, who launce in hand
 Mounted his steed to free th' enchanted land,
 Our Quixote bard sets out a monster taming,
 Arm'd at all points, to fight that hydra—Gaming.
 Aloft on Pegasus he waves his pen,
 And hurls defiance at the caitiff's den :
 The first on fancy'd giants spent his rage,
 But this has more than windmills to engage.
 He combats passion, rooted in the soul,
 Whose powers at once delight ye and controul ;
 Whose magic bondage each lost slave enjoys,
 Nor wishes freedom, though the spell destroys.
 To save our land from this magician's charms,
 And rescue maids and matrons from his arms,
 Our knight poetic comes—And, Oh, ye fair !
 This black Enchanter's wicked arts beware !
 His subtle poison dims the brightest eyes,
 And at his touch, each grace and beauty dies.
 Love, gentleness and joy to rage give way,
 And the soft dove becomes a bird of prey.
 May this our bold advent'rer break the spell,
 And drive the daem'on to his native hell.
 Ye slaves of passion, and ye dupes of chance,
 Wake all your pow'rs from this destructive trance !
 Shake off the shackles of this tyrant vice :
 Hear other calls than those of cards and dice :
 Be learn'd in nobler arts than arts of play,
 And other debts than those of honour pay.
 No longer live insensible to shame,
 Lost to your country, families and fame.
 Could our romantic muse this work achieve,
 Would there one honest heart in Britain grieve ?
 Th' attempt, though wild, would not in vain be made,
 If ev'ry honest hand would lend its aid.

THE BUDGESS

DRAMA

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

		<i>Drury-Lane.</i>
Beverley,	—	Mr. Reddish.
Levson,	—	Mr. Brereton.
Stukely,	—	Mr. Palmer.
Jarvis,	—	Mr. Aickin.
Bates,	—	Mr. Packer.
Dawson,	—	Mr. Norris.
Waiter,	—	Mr. Everard.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Beverley,	—	Miss Younge.
Charlotte,	—	Miss Hopkins.
Lucy,	—	Miss Platt.

THE

THE GAMESTER.

* * The lines distinguished by inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

ACT I.

Enter Mrs. Beverely and Charlotte:

MRS. BEVERLEY.

B E comforted, my dear; all may be well yet. And now, methinks, the lodging begins to look with another face. Oh, sister! sister! if these were all my hardships; if all I had to complain of were no more than quitting my house, servants, equipage, and shew, your pity would be weakness.

Char. Is poverty nothing, then?

Mrs. B. Nothing in the world, if it affected only me. While we had a fortune, I was the happiest of the rich: and now 'tis gone, give me but a bare subsistence and my husband's snifles, and I'll be the happiest of the poor. To me now these lodgings want nothing but their master. Why do you look at me?

Char. That I may hate my brother.

Mrs. B. Don't talk so, Charlotte.

Char. Has he not undone you?—Oh, this pernicious vice of gaming! But methinks his usual hours of four or five in the morning might have contented him; 'twas misery enough to wake for him till then. Need he have staid out all night? I shall learn to detest him?

Mrs. B. Not for the first fault. He never slept from me before.

Char. Slept from you! No, no, his nights have nothing to do with sleep. How has this one vice driven him from every virtue! Nay, from his affections, too!

—The time was, sister—

Mrs.

Mrs. B. And is. I have no fear of his affections. Would I knew that he were safe!

Char. From ruin and his companions——But that's impossible. His poor little boy, too? What must become of him?

Mrs. B. Why want shall teach him industry. From his father's mistakes he shall learn prudence, and from his mother's resignation, patience. Poverty has no such terrors in it as you imagine. There's no condition of life, sickness and pain excepted, where happiness is excluded. The husbandman, who rises early to his labour, enjoys more welcome rest at night for't. His bread is sweeter to him; his home happier; his family dearer; his enjoyments surer. The fun that rouses him in the morning, sets in the evening to release him. All situations have their comforts, if sweet contentment dwell in the heart. But my poor Beverley has none. The thought of having ruined those he loves, is misery for ever to him. Would I could ease his mind of that!

Char. If he alone were ruined, 'twere just he should be punished. He is my brother, 'tis true; but when I think of what he has done; of the fortune you brought him; of his own large estate too, squandered away upon this vilest of passions, and among the vilest of wretches! Oh, I have no patience! My own little fortune is untouched, he says. Would I were sure on't.

Mrs. B. And so you may——'twould be a sin to doubt it.

Char. I will be sure on't——'twas madness in me to give it to his management. But I'll demand it from him this morning. I have a melancholy occasion for't.

Mrs. B. What occasion?

Char. To support a sister.

Mrs. B. No; I have no need on't. Take it, and reward a lover with it. The generous Lewson deserves much more. Why won't you make him happy?

Char. Because my sister's miserable.

Mrs. B. You must not think so. I have my jewels left yet. I'll sell them to supply our wants; and when all's gone, these hands shall toil for our support. The poor should be industrious——Why those tears, Charlotte?

Char. They flow in pity for you.

Mrs.

THE GAMESTER.

Mrs. B. All may be well yet. When he has nothing to lose I shall fetter him in these arms again ; and then what is it to be poor ?

Char. Cure him but of this destructive passion, and my uncle's death may retrieve all yet.

Mrs. B. Ay, Charlotte, could we cure him. But the disease of play admits no cure but poverty ; and the loss of another fortune would but encrease his shame and his affliction. Will Mr. Lewson call this morning ?

Char. He said so last night. He gave me hints too, that he had suspicions of our friend Stukely.

Mrs. B. Not of treachery to my husband ? That he loves play, I know ; but surely he's honest.

Char. He would fain be thought so ; therefore I doubt him. Honesty needs no pains to set itself off.

Enter Lucy.

Mrs. B. What now, Lucy ?

Lucy. Your old steward, Madam. I had not the heart to deny him admittance, the good old man begged so hard for't.

[Exit Lucy.]

Enter Jarvis.

Mrs. B. Is this well, Jarvis ? I desired you to avoid me.

Jar. Did you, Madam ? I am an old man, and had forgot. Perhaps, too, you forbad my tears ; but I am old, Madam, and age will be forgetful.

Mrs. B. The faithful creature ! how he moves me.

[To Char.]

Char. Not to have seen him had been cruelty.

Jar. I have forgot these apartments, too. I remember none such in my young master's house ; and yet I have lived in't these five and twenty years. His good father would not have dismissed me.

Mrs. B. He had no reason, Jarvis.

Jar. I was faithful to him while he lived, and when he died, he bequeathed me to his son. I have been faithful to him, too.

Mrs. B. I know it, I know it, Jarvis.

Char. We both know it.

Jar. I am an old man, Madam, and have not a long time to live. I asked but to have died with him, and he dismissed me.

Mrs.

Mrs. B. Pr'ythee no more of this ! 'Twas his poverty that dismissed you.

Jar. Is he indeed so poor, then ? — Oh ! he was the joy of my old heart — But must his creditors have all ? — And have they sold his house too ? His father built it when he was but a prating boy. The times that I have carried him in these arms ! And, Jarvis, says he, when a beggar has asked charity of me, why should people be poor ? You shan't be poor, Jarvis ; if I was a king, nobody should be poor. Yet he is poor. And then he was so brave ! — Oh, he was a brave little boy ! And yet so merciful, he'd not have killed the gnat that stung him.

Mrs. B. Speak to him, Charlotte ; for I cannot.

Char. When I have wiped my eyes.

Jar. I have a little money, Madam ; it might have been more, but I have loved the poor. All that I have is yours.

Mrs. B. No, Jarvis ; we have enough yet. I thank you, though, and will deserve your goodness.

Jar. But shall I see my master ? And will he let me attend him in his distresses ? I'll be no expence to him ; and 'twill kill me to be refused. Where is he, Madam ?

Mrs. B. Not at home, Jarvis. You shall see him another time.

Char. To-morrow, or the next day — Oh, Jarvis ! what a change is here !

Jar. A change indeed, Madam ! My old heart akes at it. And yet, methinks — But here's somebody coming.

Enter Lucy with Stukely.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, Madam.

[Exit.]

Stu. Good morning to you, ladies. Mr. Jarvis, your servant. Where's my friend, Madam ? [To Mrs. Bev.

Mrs. B. I should have asked that question of you. Have you seen him to-day ?

Stu. No, Madam.

Char. Nor last night ?

Stu. Last night ! Did he not come home then ?

Mrs. B. No. Were you not together ?

Stu. At the beginning of the evening ; but not since. Where can he have staid ?

Char. You call yourself his friend, Sir ; why do you encourage him in this madness of gaming ?

Stu.

THE GAMESSTER.

11

Stu. You have asked me that question before, Madam ; and I told you my concern was that I could not save him ; Mr. Beverly is a man, Madam ; and if the most friendly entreaties have no effect upon him, I have no other means. My purse has been his, even to the injury of my fortune. If that has been encouragement, I deserve censure ; but I meant it to retrieve him.

Mrs. B. I don't doubt it, Sir ; and I thank you—But where did you leave him last night ?

Stu. At Wilson's, Madam, if I ought to tell ; in company I did not like. Possibly he may be there still. Mr. Jarvis knows the house, I believe.

Jar. Shall I go, Madam ?

Mrs. B. No, he may take it ill.

Char. He may go as from himself.

Stu. And, if he pleases, Madam, without naming me. I am faulty myself, and should conceal the errors of a friend. But I can refuse nothing here.

(Bowing to the Ladies.)

Jar. I would fain see him methinks.

Mrs. B. Do so, then ; but take care how you upbraid him—I have never upbraided him.

Jar. Would I could bring him comfort ! [Exit Jarvis.

Stu. Don't be too much alarmed, Madam. All men have their errors, and their times of seeing them. Perhaps my friend's time is not come yet. But he has an uncle ; and old men don't live for ever. You should look forward, Madam ; we are taught how to value a second fortune by the loss of a first. [Knocking at the door.

Mrs. B. Hark !—No—that knocking was too rude for Mr. Beverley. Pray heaven he be well !

Stu. Never doubt it, Madam. You shall be well, too—Every thing shall be well. [Knocking again.

Mrs. B. The knocking is a little loud, though—Who waits there ? Will none of you answer ?—None of you, did I say ?—Alas, what was I thinking of ! I had forgot myself.

Char. I'll go, sister—But don't be alarmed so. [Exit.

Stu. What extraordinary accident have you to fear, Madam ?

Mrs. Bev. I beg your pardon ; but 'tis ever thus with me in Mr. Beverley's absence. No one knocks at the door, but I fancy it is a messenger of ill news.

Stu.

Stu. You are too fearful, Madam; 'twas but one night of absence; and if ill thoughts intrude (as love is always doubtful) think of your worth and beauty, and drive them from your breast.

Mrs. B. What thoughts? I have no thoughts that wrong my husband.

Stu. Such thoughts indeed would wrong him. The world is full of slander; and every wretch that knows himself unjust, charges his neighbour with like passions; and by the general frailty hides his own—If you are wise, and would be happy, turn a deaf ear to such reports. 'Tis ruin to believe them.

Mrs. B. Ay, worse than ruin. 'Twould be to sin against conviction. Why was it mentioned?

Stu. To guard you against rumour. The sport of half mankind is mischief; and for a single error they make men devils. If their tales reach you, disbelieve them.

Mrs. B. What tales? By whom? Why told? I have heard nothing—or if I had, with all his errors, my Beverley's firm faith admits no doubt—It is my safety, my seat of rest and joy, while the storm threatens round me. I'll not forsake it. [Stukely sighs and looks down.] Why turn you, Sir, away? and why that sigh?

Stu. I was attentive, Madam; and sighs will come we know not why. Perhaps I have been too busy—if it should seem so, impute my zeal to friendship, that meant to guard you against evil tongues. Your Beverley is wronged, slandered most vilely—My life upon his truth.

Mrs. B. And mine too. Who is't that doubts it? But no matter—I am prepared, Sir—Yet why this caution?—You are my husband's friend; I think you mine too; the common friend of both. [Pauses.] I had been unconcerned else.

Stu. For heaven's sake, Madam, be so still! I meant to guard you against suspicion, not to alarm it.

Mrs. B. Nor have you, Sir. Who told you of suspicion? I have a heart it cannot reach.

Stu. Then I am happy—I would say more—but am prevented.

Enter Charlotte.

Mrs. B. Who was it, Charlotte?

Char. What a heart has that Jarvis!—A creditor, sister.

sister. But the good old man has taken him away—Don't distress his wife; don't distress his sister, I could hear him say. 'Tis cruel to distress the afflicted—And when he saw me at the door, he begged pardon that his friend had knocked so loud.

Stu. I wish I had known of this. Was it a large demand, Madam?

Char. I heard not that; but visits, such as these, we must expect often—Why so distress'd, sister? This is no new affliction.

Mrs. B. No, Charlotte; but I am faint with watching—quite sunk and spiritless—Will you excuse me, Sir? I'll to my chamber, and try to rest a little.

Stu. Good thoughts go with you, Madam.

[*Exit Mrs. Bev.*

My bait is taken, then, [*Aside.*]—Poor Mrs. Beverley! How my heart grieves to see her thus!

Char. Cure her, and be a friend, then.

Stu. How cure her, Madam?

Char. Reclaim my brother.

Stu. Ay, give him a new creation, or breathe another soul into him. I'll think on't, Madam. Advice, I see, is thankless.

Char. Useless I am sure it is, if thro' mistaken friendship, or other motives, you feed his passion with your purse, and sooth it by example. Physicians, to cure fevers, keep from the patient's thirsty lip the cup that would enflame him. You give it to his hands. [*A knocking.*] Hark, Sir!—These are my brother's desperate symptoms—Another creditor.

Stu. One not so easily got rid of—What, Lewson!

[*Enter Lewson.*

Lew. Madam, your servant—Yours, Sir. I was enquiring for you at your lodgings.

Stu. This morning! You had business, then?

Lew. You'll call it by another name, perhaps. Where's Mr. Beverley, Madam?

Char. We have sent to enquire for him.

Lew. Is he abroad then? He did not use to go out so early.

Char. No, nor stay out so late.

Lew. Is that the case? I am sorry for it. But Mr. Stukely, perhaps, may direct you to him.

Stu. I have already, Sir. But what was your business with me?

Lew. To congratulate you upon your late successes at play. Poor Beverley!—But you are his friend; and there's a comfort in having successful friends.

Stu. And what am I to understand by this?

Lew. That Beverley's a poor man, with a rich friend; that's all.

Stu. Your words would mean something, I suppose. Another time, Sir, I shall desire an explanation.

Lew. And why not now? I am no dealer in long sentences. A minute or two will do for me.

Stu. But not for me, Sir. I am slow of apprehension, and must have time and privacy. A lady's presence engages my attention. Another morning I may be found at home.

Lew. Another morning, then, I'll wait upon you.

Stu. I shall expect you, Sir. Madam, your servant.

[*Exit Stu.*]

Char. What mean you by this?

Lew. To hint to him that I know him.

Char. How know him? Mere doubt and supposition!

Lew. I shall have proof soon.

Char. And what then? Would you risk your life to be his punisher?

Lew. My life, Madam! Don't be afraid. And yet I am happy in your concern for me. But let it content you, that I know this Stukely—'Twould be as easy to make him honest as brave.

Char. And what do you intend to do?

Lew. Nothing, till I have proof. Yet my suspicions are well-grounded—But, methinks, Madam, I am acting here without authority. Could I have leave to call Mr. Beverley brother, his concerns would be my own. Why will you make my services appear officious?

Char. You know my reasons, and should not press me. But I am cold, you say; and cold I will be, while a poor sister's destitute—My heart bleeds for her; and till I see her sorrows moderated, love has no joys for me.

Lew. Can I be less a friend by being a brother? I would

would not say an unkind thing—But the pillar of your house is shaken; prop it with another, and it shall stand firm again. You must comply.

Char. And will, when I have peace within myself. But let us change this subject—Your business here this morning is with my sister. Misfortunes press too hard upon her; yet, till to-day, she has borne them nobly.

Lew. Where is she?

Char. Gone to her chamber. Her spirits failed her.

Lew. I hear her coming. Let what has passed with Stukely be a secret—She has already too much to trouble her.

Enter Mrs. Beverley.

Mrs. B. Good morning, Sir; I heard your voice, and, as I thought, enquiring for me. Where's Mr. Stukely, Charlotte?

Char. This moment gone—You have been in tears, sister; but here's a friend shall comfort you.

Lew. Or, if I add to your distresses, I'll beg your pardon, Madam. The sale of your house and furniture was finished yesterday.

Mrs. B. I know it, Sir; I know too your generous reason for putting me in mind of it. But you have obliged me too much already.

Lew. There are trifles, Madam, which I know you have set a value on; those I have purchased, and will deliver. I have a friend, too, that esteems you—He has bought largely, and will call nothing his, till he has seen you. If a visit to him would not be painful, he has begged it may be this morning.

Mrs. B. Not painful in the least. My pain is from the kindness of my friends. Why am I to be obliged beyond the power of return?

Lew. You shall repay us at your own time. I have a coach waiting at the door—Shall we have your company, Madam? [To Char.]

Char. No; my brother may return soon; I'll stay and receive him.

Mrs. B. He may want a comforter, perhaps. But don't upbraid him, Charlotte. We shan't be absent long. Come, Sir, since I must be so obliged.

Lew. 'Tis I that am obliged. An hour, or less, will

be sufficient for us. We shall find you at home, Madam.

[To Char. and exit with Mrs. Bev.

Char. Certainly. I have but little inclination to appear abroad. Oh, this brother, this brother! to what wretchedness has he reduced us!

[Exit.

SCENE changes to Stukely's Lodgings.

Enter Stukely.

Stu. That Lewson suspects me 'tis too plain. Yet why should he suspect me? — I appear the friend of Beverley as much as he. But I am rich, it seems; and so I am, thanks to another's folly, and my own wisdom. To what use is wisdom, but to take advantage of the weak? This Beverley's my fool; I cheat him, and he calls me friend. But more business must be done yet — His wife's jewels are unsold; so is the reversion of his uncle's estate: I must have these too. And then there's a treasure above all — I love his wife — Before she knew this Beverley I loved her; but, like a cringing fool, bowed at a distance, while he stepp'd in and won her — Never, never will I forgive him for it. My pride, as well as love, is wounded by this conquest. I must have vengeance. Those hints, this morning, were well thrown in — Already they have fastened on her. If jealousy should weaken her affections, want may corrupt her virtue — My heart rejoices in the hope — These jewels may do much — He shall demand them of her; which, when mine, shall be converted to special purposes — What now, Bates?

Enter Bates.

Bates. Is it a wonder, then, to see me? The forces are all in readiness, and only wait for orders. Where's Beverley?

Stu. At last night's rendezvous, waiting for me. Is Dawson with you?

Bates. Dressed like a nobleman; with money in his pocket, and a set of dice that shall deceive the devil.

Stu. That fellow has a head to undo a nation; but for the rest, they are such low-mannered, ill-looking dogs, I wonder Beverley has not suspected them.

Bates. No matter for manners and looks. Do you supply them with money, and they are gentlemen by profession — The passion of gaming casts such a mist before

fore the eyes, that the nobleman shall be surrounded with sharpers, and imagine himself in the best company.

Stu. There's that Williams, too. It was he, I suppose, that called at Beverley's with the note this morning. What directions did you give him?

Bates. To knock loud, and be clamorous. Did not you see him?

Stu. No, the fool sneaked off with Jarvis. Had he appeared within doors, as directed, the note had been discharged. I waited there on purpose. I want the women to think well of me; for Lewson's grown suspicious; he told me so himself.

Bates. What answer did you make him?

Stu. A short one—That I would see him soon, for farther explanation.

Bates. We must take care of him. But what have we to do with Beverley? Dawson and the rest are wondering at you.

Stu. Why, let them wonder. I have designs above their narrow reach. They see me lend him money, and they stare at me. But they are fools. I want him to believe me beggared by him.

Bates. And what then?

Stu. Ay, there's the question; but no matter; at night you may know more. He waits for me at Wilson's. I told the women where to find him.

Bates. To what purpose?

Stu. To save suspicion. It looked friendly, and they thanked me. Old Jarvis was dispatched to him.

Bates. And may intreat him home—

Stu. No; he expects money from me; but I'll have none. His wife's jewels must go—Women are easy creatures, and refuse nothing where they love. Follow to Wilson's; but be sure he sees you not. You are a man of character, you know; of prudence and discretion. Wait for me in an outer room; I shall have business for you presently. Come, Sir;

Let drudging fools by honesty grow great?

The shorter road to riches is deceit.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, a Gaming-house, with a Table, Box, Dice, &c.

Beverley, discovered sitting.

BEVERLEY.

WHY, what a world is this! The slave that digs for gold, receives his daily pittance, and sleeps contented; while those for whom he labours, convert their good to mischief, making abundance the means of want. Oh, shame, shame! Had Fortune given me but a little, that little had been still my own. But plenty leads to waste; and shallow streams maintain their currents, while swelling rivers beat down their banks, and leave their channels empty. What had I to do with play? I wanted nothing. My wishes and my means were equal. The poor followed me with blessings, love scattered roses on my pillow, and morning waked me to delight—Oh, bitter thought, that leads to what I was, by what I am! I would forget both—Who's there?

Enter a Waiter.

Wait. A gentleman, Sir, enquires for you.

Bev. He might have used less ceremony. Stukely, I suppose?

Wait. No, Sir, a stranger.

Bev. Well, shew him in.

[Exit Waiter.]

A messenger from Stukely then; from him that has undone me! yet all in friendship—And now he lends me his little, to bring back fortune to me.

Enter Jarvis.

Jarvis!—Why this intrusion?—Your absence had been kinder.

Jar. I came in duty, Sir. If it be troublesome—

Bev. It is—I would be private—hid even from myself. Who sent you hither?

Jar. One that would persuade you home again. My mistress is not well; her tears told me so.

Bev. Go with thy duty there then—‘ But does she weep? I am to blame to let her weep.’ Pr’ythee, begone: I have no business for thee.

Jar. Yes, Sir; to lead you from this place. I am your

your servant still. Your prosperous fortune blessed my old age. If that has left you, I must not leave you.

Bev. Not leave me ! Recall past time, then ; or thro' this sea of storms and darkness, shew me a star to guide me — But what canst thou ?

Jar. The little that I can I will. You have been generous to me — I would not offend you, Sir — but —

Bev. No. Think'st thou I'd ruin thee, too ? I have enough of shame already — My wife, my wife ! Wouldst thou believe it, Jarvis ? I have not seen her all this long night — I who have loved her so, that every hour of absence seemed as a gap in life. But other bonds have held me — Oh, I have played the boy ! dropping my counters in the stream, and reaching to redeem them, lost myself. ' Why wilt thou follow misery ? Or if thou wilt, ' go to thy mistress : she has no guilt to sting her ; and ' therefore may be comforted.'

Jar. For pity's sake, Sir ! — I have no heart to see this change.

Bev. Nor I to bear it — How speaks the world of me, Jarvis ?

Jar. As of a good man dead. Of one, who, walking in a dream, fell down a precipice. The world is sorry for you.

Bev. Ay, and pities me. Says it not so ? But I was born to infamy — I'll tell thee what it says ; it calls me villain, a treacherous husband, a cruel father, a false brother, one lost to nature and her charities ; or, to say all in one short word, it calls me — gamester. — Go to thy mistress ; I'll see her presently.

Jar. And why not now ? Rude people press upon her ; loud, bawling creditors ; wretches, who know no pity — I met one at the door ; he would have seen my mistress : I wanted means of present payment, so promised it to-morrow. But others may be pressing, and she has grief enough already. Your absence hangs too heavy on her.

Bev. Tell her I'll come then. I have a moment's business. But what hast thou to do with my distresses ? Thy honesty has left thee poor ; and age wants comfort — Keep what thou hast ' for cordials,' lest between thee and the grave, misery steal in, I have a friend shall counsel me — This is that friend.

Enter Stukely.

Stu. How fares it, Beverley? Honest Mr. Jarvis, well met; I hoped to find you here. That viper Williams! Was it not he that troubled you this morning?

Jar. My mistress heard him then? — I am sorry that she heard him.

Bev. And Jarvis promised payment.

Stu. That must not be. Tell him I'll satisfy him.

Jar. Will you, Sir? Heaven will reward you for't.

Bev. Generous Stukely! Friendship like yours, had it ability like will, would more than balance the wrongs of fortune.

Stu. You think too kindly of me — Make haste to Williams; his clamours may be rude else. [To Jar.

Jar. And my master will go home again — Alas! Sir, we know of hearts there breaking for his absence.

[Exit.]

Bev. Would I were dead!

Stu. 'Or turn'd hermit, counting a string of beads in a dark cave; or under a weeping willow, praying for mercy on the wicked.' Ha! ha! ha! — Pr'ythee be a man, and leave dying to disease and old age. Fortune may be ours again; at least we'll try for't.

Bev. No; it has fool'd us on too far.

Stu. Ay, ruin'd us; and therefore we'll sit down contented. These are the despondings of men without money; but let the shining ore chink in the pocket, and folly turns to wisdom. We are Fortune's children — True, she's a fickle mother; but shall we droop because she's peevish? — No; she has smiles in store. And these her frowns are meant to brighten 'em.

Bev. Is this a time for levity? But you are single in the ruin, and therefore may talk lightly of it. With me 'tis complicated misery.

Stu. You censure me unjustly — I but assumed these spirits to cheer my friend. Heaven knows he wants a comforter.

Bev. What new misfortune?

Stu. I would have brought you money; but lenders want securities. What's to be done? All that was mine is yours already.

Bev.

Bev. And there's the double weight that sinks me. I have undone my friend, too; one, who to save a drowning wretch, reached out his hand, and perished with him.

Stu. Have better thoughts.

Bev. Whence are they to proceed? I have nothing left.

Stu. [Sighing.] Then we're indeed undone. What nothing? No moveables, nor useleſs trinkets? Bawbles locked up in caskets to starve their owners? I have ventured deeply for you.

Bev. Therefore this heart-ake; for I am lost beyond all hope.

Stu. No; means may be found to save us. Jarvis is rich. Who made him so? This is no time for ceremony.

Bev. And is it for dishonesty? The good old man! Shall I rob him too? My friend would grieve for't. No; let the little that he has, buy food and cloathing for him.

Stu. Good morning then.

[Going.]

Bev. So hasty! Why then, good morning.

Stu. And when we meet again, upbraid me. Say it was I that tempted you. Tell Lewson so; and tell him I have wrong'd you—He has suspicions of me, and will thank you.

Bev. No; we have been companions in a rash voyage, and the same storm has wreck'd us both. Mine shall be self-upbraidings.

Stu. And will they feed us? You deal unkindly by me. I have sold and borrow'd for you, while land or credit lasted; and now, when fortune should be try'd, and my heart whispers me success, I am deserted; turn'd loose to beggary, while you have hoards.

Bev. What hoards? Name 'em, and take 'em.

Stu. Jewels.

Bev. And shall this thriftless hand seize them too? My poor, poor wife! Must she lose all? I would not wound her so.

Stu. Nor I, but from necessity. One effort more, and Fortune may grow kind. I have unusual hopes.

Bev. Think of some other means then.

Stu.

Stu. I have ; and you rejected 'em.

Ber. Pr'ythee let me be a man.

Stu. Ay, and your friend a poor one. But I have done. And for these trinkets of a woman, why, let her keep 'em to deck out pride with, and shew a laughing world that she has finery to starve in.

Ber. No ; she shall yield up all. My friend demands it. But need we have talk'd lightly of her ? The jewels that she values are truth and innocence——Those will adorn her ever ; and for the rest, she wore 'em for a husband's pride, and to his wants will give 'em. Alas ! you know her not. Where shall we meet ?

Stu. No matter. I have chang'd my mind. Leave me to a prison ; 'tis the reward of friendship.

Ber. Perish mankind first —Leave you to a prison ! No ; fallen as you see me, I'm not that wretch. Nor would I change this heart, o'ercharged as 'tis with folly and misfortune, for one most prudent and most happy, if callous to a friend's distress.

Stu. You are too warm.

Ber. In such a cause, not to be warm is to be frozen. Farewel. I'll meet you at your lodgings.

Stu. Reflect a little. The jewels may be lost. Better not hazard 'em—I was too pressing.

Ber. And I ungrateful. Reflection takes up time. I have no leisure for't. Within an hour expect me.

[Exit.]

Stu. The thoughtless, shallow prodigal ! We shall have sport at night, then—But hold——The jewels are not ours yet—They lady may refuse 'em—The husband may relent, too—'Tis more than probable—I'll write a note to Beverley, and the contents shall spur him to demand 'em——But am I grown this rogue thro' avarice ? No ; I have warmer motives, love and revenge—Ruin the husband and the wife's virtue may be bid for. 'Tis of uncertain value, and sinks or rises in the purchase, as want or wealth, or passion governs. The poor part cheaply with it ; rich dames, tho' pleased with selling, will have high prices for't. Your love-sick girls give it for oaths and lying. But tender wives, who boast of honour and affections, keep it against famine—Why, let famine come then ; I am in haste to purchase.'

[Enter]

Enter Bates.

Look to your men, Bates ; there's money stirring. We meet to-night upon this spot. Hasten, and tell 'em so. Beverley calls upon me at my lodgings, and we return together. Hasten, I say, the rogues will scatter else.

Bates. Not till their leader bids 'em.

Stu. Come on, then. Give 'em the word and follow me ; I must advise with you — This is a day of business.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Beverley and Charlotte.

Char. Your looks are chang'd, too ; there's wildness in 'em. My wretched sister ! How will it grieve her to see you thus !

Bev. No, no — a little rest will ease me. And for your Lewson's kindness to her, it has my thanks ; I have no more to give him.

Char. Yes ; a sister and her fortune. I trifle with him, and he complains — My looks, he says, are cold upon him. He thinks too — — —

Bev. That I have lost your fortune — He dares not think so.

Char. Nor does he — You are too quick at guessing. He cares not if you had. That care is mine — I lent it you to husband, and now I claim it.

Bev. You have suspicions then.

Char. Cure 'em, and give it me.

Bev. To stop a sister's chiding ?

Char. To vindicate her brother.

Bev. How if he needs no vindication ?

Char. I would fain hope so.

Bev. Ay, would and cannot. Leave it to time, then ; 'twill satisfy all doubts.

Char. Mine are already satisfied.

Bev. 'Tis well. And when the subject is renewed, speak to me like a sister, and I will answer like a brother.

Char. To tell me I'm a beggar. Why, tell it now. I that can bear the ruin of those dearer to me, the ruin of a sister and her infant, can bear that too.

Bev.

Bev. No more of this—you wring my heart.

Char. Would that the misery were all your own! But innocence must suffer—Unthinking rioter! whose home was heaven to him; an angel dwelt there, and a little cherub, that crowned his days with blessings.—How he has lost this heaven to league with devils!

Bev. Forbear, I say; reproaches come too late; they search, but cure not. And for the fortune you demand, we'll talk to-morrow on't; our tempers may be milder.

Char. Or, if 'tis gone, why farewell all. I claimed it for a sister: 'She holds my heart in her's; and every 'pang she feels tears it in pieces'—But I'll upbraid no more. What Heaven permits, perhaps, it may ordain; 'and sorrow then is sinful.' Yet that the husband! father! brother! should be its instruments of vengeance!—'Tis grievous to know that.

Bev. If you're my sister, spare the remembrance—it wounds too deeply. To-morrow shall clear all; and when the worst is known, it may be better than your fears. Comfort my wife; and for the pains of absence, I'll make atonement. The world may yet go well with us.

Char. See where she comes!—Look cheerfully upon her—Affections such as hers are prying, and lend those eyes that read the soul.

Enter Mrs. Beverley and Lewson.

Mrs. B. My life!

Bev. My love! how fares it? I have been a truant husband.

Mrs. B. But we meet now, and that heals all—Doubts and alarms I have had; but in this dear embrace I bury and forget 'em. My friend here [*Pointing to Lewson*] has been indeed a friend. Charlotte, 'tis you must thank him: your brother's thanks and mine are of too little value.

Bev. Yet what we have we'll pay. I thank you, Sir, and am obliged. I would say more, but that your goodness to the wife, upbraids the husband's follies. Had I been wise, she had not trespassed on your bounty.

Lew. Nor has she trespassed. The little I have done, acceptance over-pays.

Char.

Char. So friendship thinks—

Mrs. B. And double obligations by striving to conceal 'em—We'll talk another time on't.—You are too thoughtful, love.

Bev. No, I have reason for these thoughts.

Char. And hatred for the cause—Would you had that too!

Ber. I have—The cause was avarice.

Char. And who the tempter?

Bev. A ruined friend—ruined by too much kindness.

Lew. Ay, worse than ruined; stabbed in his fame, mortally stabbed—riches can't cure him.

Bev. Or if they could, those I have drained him of. Something of this he hinted in the morning—that Lewson had suspicions of him—Why these suspicions?

[Angrily.]

Lew. At school we knew this Stukely. A cunning, plodding boy he was, sordid and cruel, slow at his task, but quick at shifts and tricking. He schemed out mischief, that others might be punished; and would tell his tale with so much art, that for the lash he merited, rewards and praise were given him. Shew me a boy with such a mind, and time, that ripens manhood in him, shall ripen vice too—I'll prove him, and lay him open to you—Till then be warned—I know him, and therefore shun him.

Bev. As I would those that wrong him.—You are too busy, Sir.

Mrs. B. No, not too busy—Mistaken, perhaps—That had been milder.

Lew. No matter, Madam. I can bear this, and praise the heart that prompts it—Pity such friendship should be so placed!

Bev. Again, Sir! But I'll bear too—You wrong him, Lewson, and will be sorry for't.

Char. Ay, when 'tis proved he wrongs him. The world is full of hypocrites.

Bev. And Stukely one—so you would infer, I think.—I'll hear no more of this—my heart akes for him—I have undone him.

Lew. The world says otherwise.

Bev. The world is false then——I have business with you, love. [To *Mrs. Bev.*] We'll leave 'em to their ran-cour. [Going.]

Char. No; we shall find room within for't.——Come this way, Sir. [To *Lew.*]

Lew. Another time my friend will thank me; that time is hastening too. [Exeunt *Lew.* and *Char.*]

Bev. They hurt me beyond bearing——Is Stukely false? Then honesty has left us! 'Twere finning against Heaven to think so.

Mrs. B. I never doubted him.

Bev. No; you are charity. Meekness and ever-during patience live in that heart, and love that knows no change.——Why did I ruin you?

Mrs. B. You have not ruined me. I have no wants when you are present, nor wishes in your absence but to be blest with your return. Be but resign'd to what has happened, and I am rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

Bev. My generous girl!—But memory will be busy; still crowding on my thoughts, to sour the present by the past. I have another pang too.

Mrs. B. Tell it, and let me cure it.

Bev. That friend——that generous friend, whose fame they have traduced——I have undone him too: While he had means he lent me largely; and now a pri-fon must be his portion.

Mrs. B. No; I hope otherwise.

Bev. To hope must be to act. The charitable wish feeds not the hungry——Something must be done.

Mrs. B. What?

Bev. In bitterness of heart he told me, just now he told me, I had undone him. Could I hear that, and think of happiness? No; I have disclaimed it, while he is miserable.

Mrs. B. The world may mend with us; and then we may be grateful. There's comfort in that hope.

Bev. Ay; 'tis the sick man's cordial, his promised cure; while in preparing it the patient dies.——What now?

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. A letter, Sir.

[*Delivers it and Ex.*

Bev. The hand is Stukely's.

[*Opens it and reads it to himself.*

Mrs. B. And brings good news—at least I'll hope so
—What says he, love?

Bev. Why this—too much for patience. Yet he directs me to conceal it from you. [Reads.]

“ Let your haste to see me be the only proof of your esteem for me. I have determined, since we parted, to bid adieu to England; chusing rather to forsake my country, than owe my freedom in it, to the means we talked of. Keep this a secret at home, and hasten to the ruined

R. STUKEY.”

Ruined by friendship!—I must relieve or follow him.

Mrs. B. Follow him, did you say? Then I am lost indeed!

Bev. O this infernal vice! how has it sunk me! A vice, whose highest joy was poor to my domestic happiness. Yet how have I pursued it! turned all my comforts to bitterest pangs, and all my smiles to tears. Damn'd, damn'd infatuation!

Mrs. B. Be cool, my life! What are the means the letter talks of? Have you—have I those means? Tell me, and ease me. I have no life while you are wretched.

Bev. No, no; it must not be. 'Tis I alone have finned; 'tis I alone must suffer. You shall reserve those means to keep my child and his wronged mother from want and wretchedness.

Mrs. B. What means?

Bev. I came to rob you of 'em—but cannot—dare not—Those jewels are your sole support—I should be more than monster to request 'em.

Mrs. B. My jewels? Trifles, not worth the speaking of, if weighed against a husband's peace; but let 'em purchase that, and the world's wealth is of less value.

Bev. Amazing goodness! How little do I seem before such virtues!

Mrs. B. No more, my love. I kept 'em till occasion called to use 'em ; now is the occasion, and I'll resign 'em chearfully.

Bev. Why we'll be rich in love then. ' But this excess of kindness melts me. Yet for a friend one would do much—He has denied me nothing.'

Mrs. B. Come to my closet—But let him manage wisely. We have no more to give him.

Bev. Where learnt my love this excellence? ' 'Tis Heaven's own teaching : that Heaven, which to an angel's form has given a mind more lovely.' I am unworthy of you, but will deserve you better.

Henceforth my follies and neglects shall cease,
And all to come be penitence and peace ;
Vice shall no more attract me with her charms,
Nor pleasure reach me, but in these dear arms.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE Stukely's Lodgings.

Enter Stukely and Bates.

STUKELY.

SO runs the world, Bates. Fools are the natural prey of knaves ; Nature designed them so, when she made lambs for wolves. The laws that fear and policy have framed, Nature declaims : she knows but two, and those are force and cunning. The nobler law is force ; but then there's danger in't ; while cunning, like a skilful miner, works safely and unseen.

Bates. And therefore wisely. Force must have nerves and sinews ; cunning wants neither. The dwarf that has it shall trip the giant's heels up.

Stu. And bind him to the ground. Why, we'll erect a shrine for Nature, and be her oracles. Conscience is weakness ; fear made it, and fear maintains it. The dread of shame, inward reproaches, and fictitious burn-
ings

ings swell out the phantom. Nature knows none of this ; her laws are freedom.

Bates. Sound doctrine, and well delivered !

Stu. We are sincere, too, and practise what we teach. Let the grave pedant say as much.—But now to business —The jewels are disposed of : and Beverley again worth money. He waits to count his gold out, and then comes hither. If my design succeeds, this-night we finish with him—Go to your lodgings, and be busy—You understand conveyances, and can make ruin sure.

Bates. Better stop here. The sale of this reversion may be talked of—There's danger in it.

Stu. No, 'tis the mark I aim at. We'll thrive and laugh. You are the purchaser, and there's the payment. [Giving a pocket-book] He thinks you rich ; and so you shall be. Enquire for titles, and deal hardly ; 'twill look like honesty.

Bates. How if he suspects us.

Stu. Leave it to me. I study hearts, and when to work upon them. Go to your lodgings ; and if we come, be busy over papers. Talk of a thoughtless age, of gaming and extravagance ; you have a face for't.

Bates. A feeling too that would avoid it. We push too far ; but I have cautioned you. If it ends ill, you'll think of me—and so adieu. [Exit.

Stu. This fellow sins by halves ; his fears are conscience to him. I'll turn these fears to use. Rogues that dread shame, will still be greater rogues to hide their guilt—This shall be thought of. Lewson grows troublesome—We must get rid of him.—He knows too much. I have a tale for Beverley ; part of it truth, too —He shall call Lewson to account—If it succeeds, 'tis well ; if not, we must try other means—But here he comes—I must dissemble.

Enter Beverley.

Look to the door there ! [In a seeming fright.]—My friend !—I thought of other visitors.

Bew. No ; these shall guard you from them—[Offering notes.] Take them, and use them cautiously—The world deals hardly by us.

Stu. And shall I leave you destitute ? No : your wants are the greatest. Another climate may treat me kinder. The shelter of to-night takes me from this.

Bev. Let these be your support then—Yet is there need of parting? I may have means again; we'll share them, and live wisely.

Stu. No: I should tempt you on. Habit is nature in me: ruin can't cure it. Even now I would be gaming. Taught by experience as I am, and knowing this poor sum is all that's left us, I am for venturing still—And say I am to blame—Yet will this little supply our wants? No, we must put it out to usury. Whether 'tis madness in me, or some restless impulse of good fortune, I yet am ignorant; but—

Bev. Take it, and succeed then. I'll try no more.

Stu. 'Tis surely impulse; it pleads so strongly—But you are cold—We'll e'en part here then. And for this last reserve, keep it for better uses; I'll have none on't. I thank you though, and will seek fortune singly—One thing I had forgot—

Bev. What is it?

Stu. Perhaps, 'twere best forgotten. But I am open in my nature, and zealous for the honour of my friend—Lewson speaks freely of you.

Bev. Of you I know he does.

Stu. I can forgive him for't; but, for my friend, I'm angry.

Bev. What says he of me?

Stu. That Charlotte's fortune is embezzled—He talks on't loudly.

Bev. He shall be silenced then—How heard you of it?

Stu. From many. He questioned Bates about it. You must account with him, he says.

Bev. Or he with me—and soon, too.

Stu. Speak mildly to him. Cautions are best.

Bev. I'll think on't—But whither go you?

Stu. From poverty and prisons—No matter whither. If fortune changes you may hear from me.

Bev. May these be prosperous, then. [Offering the notes, which he refuses.] Nay, they are yours—I have sworn it, and will have nothing—Take them and use them.

Stu. Singly I will not. My cares are for my friend; for his lost fortune, and ruined family. All separate interests I disclaim. Together we have fallen; together

we

we must rise. My heart, my honour, and affections, all will have it so.

Bev. I am weary of being fooled.

Stu. And so am I—Here let us part, then—These bodings of good-fortune shall all be stifled; I'll call them folly, and forget them—This one embrace, and then farewell.

[Offering to embrace.

Bev. No; stay a moment—How my poor heart's distracted! I have these bodings too; but whether caught from you, or prompted by my good or evil genius, I know not—The trial shall determine—And yet, my wife.

Stu. Ay, ay, she'll chide.

Bev. No; my chidings are all here.

[Pointing to his heart.

Stu. I'll not persuade you.

Bev. I am persuaded; by reason too; the strongest reason; Necessity. Oh, could I but regain the height I have fallen from, heaven should forsake me in my latest hour, if I again mixed in these scenes, or sacrificed the husband's peace, his joy and best affections, to avarice and infamy.

Stu. I have resolved like you; and since our motives are so honest, why should we fear success?

Bev. Come on, then—Where shall me meet?

Stu. At Wilson's—Yet if it hurts you, leave me: I have misled you often.

Bev. We have misled each other—But come! Fortune is fickle, and may be tired with plaguing us—There let us rest our hopes.

Stu. Yet think a little—

Bev. I cannot—thinking but distracts me.

When desperation leads, all thoughts are vain;
Reason would lose what rashness may obtain.

[Exeunt.

SCENE changes to Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. Beverley and Charlotte.

Char. 'Twas all a scheme, a mean one; unworthy of my brother.

Mrs. B. No, I am sure it was not—Stukely is honest too; I know he is—This madness has undone them both.

Char. My brother irrecoverably—You are too spiritless

less a wise—A mournful tale, mixed with a few kind words, will steal away your soul. The world's too subtle for such goodness. Had I been by, he should have asked your life sooner than those jewels.

Mrs. B. He should have had it, then. [Warmly.] I live but to oblige him. She who can love, and is beloved like me, will do as much. Men have done more for mistresses, and women for a base deluder: and shall a wife do less? Your chidings hurt me, Charlotte.

Char. And come too late; they might have saved you else. How could he use you so?

Mrs. B. 'Twas friendship did it. His heart was breaking for a friend.

Char. The friend that has betrayed him.

Mrs. B. Pr'ythee don't think so.

Char. To-morrow he accounts with me.

Mrs. B. And fairly—I will not doubt it.

Char. Unless a friend has wanted—I have no patience—Sister! Sister! we are bound to curse this friend.

Mrs. B. My Beverley speaks nobly of him.

Char. And Lewson truly—But I displease you with this talk.—To-morrow will instruct us.

Mrs. B. Stay till it comes then—I would not think so hardly.

Char. Nor I, but from conviction—Yet we have hope of better days. My uncle is infirm, and of an age that threatens hourly—Or if he lives, you never have offended him; and for distresses so unmerited he will have pity.

Mrs. B. I know it, and am cheerful. We have no more to lose; and for what's gone, if it brings prudence home, the purchase was well made.

Char. My Lewson will be kind too. While he and I have life and means, you shall divide with us—And see, he's here!

Enter Lewson.

We were just speaking of you.

Lew. 'Tis best to interrupt you then. Few characters will bear a scrutiny; and where the bad out-weighs the good, he's safest that's least talked of. What say you, Madam? [To Charlotte.]

Char.

Char. That I hate scandal, though a woman—therefore talk seldom of you.

Mrs. Bew. Or, with more truth, that, though a woman, she loves to praise—Therefore talks always of you. I'll leave you to decide it. [Exit.

Lew. How good and amiable! I came to talk in private with you; of matters that concern you.

Char. What matters?

Lew. First answer me sincerely to what I ask.

Char. I will—But you alarm me.

Lew. I am too grave, perhaps; but be assured of this, I have no news that troubles me, and therefore should not you.

Char. I am easy then—Propose your question.

Lew. 'Tis now a tedious twelve-month, since with an open and kind heart you said you loved me.

Char. So tedious, did you say?

Lew. And when in consequence of such sweet words, I pressed for marriage, you gave a voluntary promise that you would live for me.

Char. You think me changed, then? [Angrily.

Lew. I did not say so. A thousand times I have pressed for the performance of this promise: but private cares, a brother's and a sister's ruin, were reasons for delaying it.

Char. I had no other reasons.—Where will this end?

Lew. It shall end presently.

Char. Go on, Sir.

Lew. A promise, such as this, given freely, not extorted, the world thinks binding; but I think otherwise.

Char. And would release me from it?

Lew. You are too impatient, Madam.

Char. Cool, Sir—quite cool—Pray go on.

Lew. Time and a near acquaintance with my faults may have brought change—if it be so; or for a moment, if you have wished this promise were unmade, here I acquit you of it—This is my question then; and with such plainness as I ask it, I shall entreat an answer. Have you repented of this promise.

Char. Stay, Sir: The man that can suspect me, shall find me changed—Why am I doubted?

Lew.

Lew. My doubts are of myself. I have my faults, and you have observation. If from my temper, my words or actions, you have conceived a thought against me, or even a wish for separation, all that has passed is nothing.

Char. You startle me—But tell me—I must be answered first. Is it from honour you speak this? Or do you wish me changed?

Lew. Heaven knows I do not. Life and my Charlotte are so connected, that to lose one, were loss of both. Yet for a promise, though given in love, and meant for binding; if time, or accident, or reason should change opinion—with me that promise has no force.

Char. Why, now I'll answer you. Your doubts are prophecies—I am really changed.

Lew. Indeed!

Char. I could torment you now, as you have me; but it is not in my nature—That I am chang'd, I own: for what at first was inclination, is now grown reason in me; and from that reason, had I the world; nay, were I poorer than the poorest, and you too wanting bread, with but a hovel to invite me to—I would be yours, and happy.

Lew. My kindest Charlotte! [Taking her hand.] Thanks are too poor for this—and words too weak! But if we love so, why should our union be delayed?

Char. For happier times. The present are too wretched.

Lew. I may have reasons that press it now.

Char. What reasons?

Lew. The strongest reasons; unanswerable ones.

Char. Be quick and name them.

Lew. No, Madam; I am bound in honour to make conditions first—I am bound by inclination too. This sweet profusion of kind words pains while it pleases. I dread the losing you.

Char. Astonishment! What mean you?

Lew. First promise, that to-morrow, or the next day, you will be mine for ever.

Char. I do—though misery should succeed.

Lew. Thus then I seize you! And with you every joy on this side heaven!

Char.

Char. And thus I seal my promise. [Embracing him.] Now, Sir, your secret?

Lew. Your fortune's lost.

Char. My fortune lost! — I'll study to be humble then. But was my promise claimed for this? How nobly generous! Where learned you this sad news?

Lew. From Bates, Stukely's prime agent. I have obliged him, and he's grateful—He told it me in friendship, to warn me from my Charlotte.

Char. 'Twas honest in him, and I'll esteem him for't.

Lew. He knows much more than he has told.

Char. For me it is enough. And for your generous love, I thank you from my soul. If you'd oblige me more, give me a little time.

Lew. Why time? It robs us of our happiness.

Char. I have a task to learn first. The little pride this fortune gave me must be subdued. Once we were equal; and might have met obliging and obliged. But now 'tis otherwise; and for a life of obligations, I have not learned to bear it.

Lew. Mine is that life. You are too noble.

Char. Leave me to think on't.

Lew. To-morrow then you'll fix my happiness?

Char. All that I can, I will.

Lew. It must be so; we live but for each other. Keep what you know a secret; and when we meet to-morrow, more may be known. — Farewel. [Exit.

Char. My poor, poor sister! how would this wound her! But I'll conceal it, and speak comfort to her. [Exit.

SCENE changes to a Room in the Gaming-House.

Enter Beverley and Stukely.

Bev. Whither would you lead me? [Angrily.

Stu. Where we may vent our curses.

Bev. Ay, on yourself, and those damned counsels that have destroyed me. A thousand fiends were in that bosom, and all let loose to tempt me—I had resisted else.

Stu. Go on, Sir—I have deserved this from you.

Bev. And curses everlasting—Time is too scanty for them—

Stu. What have I done?

Bev.

Bev. What the arch-devil of old did—soothed with false hopes, for certain ruin.

Stu. Myself unhurt; nay, pleased at your destruction—So your words mean. Why, tell it to the world. I am too poor to find a friend in't.

Bev. A friend! What's he? I had a friend.

Stu. And have one still.

Bev. Ay; I'll tell you of this friend. He found me happiest of the happy. Fortune and honour crowned me; and love and peace lived in my heart. One spark of folly lurked there; that too he found; and by deceitful breath blew into flames that have consumed me. This friend were you to me.

Stu. A little more, perhaps—The friend who gave his all to save you; and not succeeding, chose ruin with you. But no matter, I have undone you, and am a villain.

Bev. No; I think not—The villains are within.

Stu. What villains?

Bev. Dawson and the rest—We have been dupes to sharpers.

Stu. How know you this? I have had doubts as well as you; yet still as fortune changed I blushed at my own thoughts—But you have proof, perhaps.

Bev. Ay, damned ones. Repeated losses—Night after night, and no reverse—Chance has no hand in this.

Stu. I think more charitably; yet I am peevish in my nature, and apt to doubt—The world speaks fairly of this Dawson, so it does of the rest. We have watched them closely too. But 'tis a right usurped by losers, to think the winners knaves—We'll have more manhood in us.

Bev. I know not what to think. This night has stung me to the quick—Blasted my reputation too—I have bound my honour to these vipers; played meanly upon credit, 'till I tired them; and now they shun me to rifle one another. What's to be done?

Stu. Nothing. My counsels have been fatal.

Bev. By heaven I'll not survive this shame—Traitor! 'tis you have brought it on me. [Taking hold of him.] Shew me the means to save me, or I'll commit a murder here, and next upon myself.

Stu. Why do it then, and rid me of ingratitude,

Bev. Pr'ythee forgive this language—I speak I know not

not what—Rage and despair are in my heart, and hurry me to madness. My home is horror to me—I'll not return to it. Speak quickly; tell me, if in this wreck of fortune, one hope remains? Name it, and be my oracle.

Stu. To vent your curses on—You have bestowed them liberally. Take your own counsel; and should a desperate hope present itself, 'twill suit your desperate fortune. I'll not advise you.

Bev. What hope? By heaven I'll catch at it, however desperate. I am so sunk in misery, it cannot lay me lower.

Stu. You have an uncle.

Bev. Ay, what of him?

Stu. Old men live long by temperance; while their heirs starve on expectation.

Bev. What mean you?

Stu. That the reversion of his estate is yours; and will bring money to pay debts with—Nay more, it may retrieve what's past.

Bev. Or leave my child a beggar.

Stu. And what's his father? A dishonourable one; engaged for sums he cannot pay—That should be thought of.

Bev. It is my shame—The poison that enflames me. Where shall we go? To whom? I am impatient 'till all's lost.

Stu. All may be yours again—Your man is Bates—He has large funds at his command, and will deal justly by you.

Bev. I am resolved—Tell them within we'll meet them presently; and with full purses, too—Come, follow me.

Stu. No. I'll have no hand in this; nor do I counsel it—Use your discretion, and act from that. You'll find me at my lodgings.

Bev. Succeed what will, this night I'll dare the worst. 'Tis loss of fear, to be completely curs'd.

[*Exit Beverley.*]

Stu. Why, lose it then for ever—Fear is the mind's worst evil; and 'tis a friendly office to drive it from the bosom—Thus far has fortune crowned me—Yet Beverley is rich; rich in his wife's best treasure, her honour

and affections. I would supplant him there too. But 'tis the curse of thinking minds to raise up difficulties. Fools only conquer women. Fearless of dangers which they see not, they press on boldy, and by persisting, prosper. Yet may a tale of art do much—Charlotte is sometimes absent. The seeds of jealousy are sown already. If I mistake not, they have taken root too. Now is the time to ripen them, and reap the harvest. The softest of her sex, if wronged in love, or thinking that she's wronged, becomes a tygress in revenge—I'll instantly to Beverley's—No matter for the danger—When beauty leads us on, 'tis indiscretion to reflect, and cowardice to doubt.

[Exit.

SCENE changes to Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. Beverley and Lucy.

Mrs. Bev. Did Charlotte tell you any thing?

Lucy. No, Madam.

Mrs. B. She look confused, methought; said she had business with her Lewson; which, when I pressed to know, tears only were her answer.

Lucy. She seemed in haste, too—Yet her return may bring you comfort.

Mrs. B. No, my kind girl; I was not born for't—But why do I distress thee? Thy sympathizing heart bleeds for the ills of others—What pity that thy mistress can't reward thee! But there's a Power above, that sees, and will remember all. [Knocking.] 'Pr'ythee sooth me with the song thou sungest last night. It suits this change of fortune; and there's a melancholy in't that pleases me.

• *Lucy.* I fear it hurts you, Madam. Your goodness, too, draws tears from me—But I'll dry them, and obey you.

S O N G.

• When Damon languish'd at my feet,
 • And I believ'd him true,
 • The moments of delight how sweet!
 • But, ah! how swift they flew!
 • The sunny hill, the flow'ry vale,
 • The garden and the grove,
 • Have echo'd to his ardent tale,
 • And vows of endless love.

• The

- The conquest gain'd, he left his prize,
- ‘ He left her to complain,
- To talk of joy with weeping eyes,
- ‘ And measure time by pain.
- But Heav'n will take the mourner's part,
- ‘ In pity to despair;
- And the last sigh that rends the heart,
- ‘ Shall waft the spirit there.

• Mrs. B. I thank thee, Lucy; I thank Heaven, too,
 • my griefs are none of these. Yet Stukely deals in
 hints; he talks of rumours; I'll urge him to speak
 plainly.' — Hark! there's some one entering.

Lu. Perhaps 'tis my master, Madam. [Exit.

Mrs. B. Let him be well, too, and I am satisfied.
 [Goes to the door and listens.] No, 'tis another's voice;
 his had been music to me. Who is it, Lucy?

Re-enter Lucy with Stukely.

Lu. Mr. Stukely, Madam. [Exit.

Stu. To meet you thus alone, Madam, was what I
 wished. Unseasonable visits, when friendship warrants
 them, need no excuse—therefore I make none.

Mrs. B. What mean you, Sir? And where is your
 friend?

Stu. Men may have secrets, Madam, which their best
 friends are not admitted to. We parted in the morning,
 not soon to meet again.

Mrs. B. You mean to leave us then; to leave your
 country too. I am no stranger to your reasons, and pity
 your misfortunes.

Stu. Your pity has undone you. Could Beverley do
 this? That letter was a false one; a mean contrivance to
 rob you of your jewels—I wrote it not.

Mrs. B. Impossible! Whence came it then?

Stu. Wrong'd as I am, Madam, I must speak plainly.

Mrs. B. Do so, and ease me. Your hints have troubled
 me. Reports, you say, are stirring—Reports of whom?
 You wished me not to credit them. What, Sir, are these
 reports?

Stu. I thought them slander, Madam; and cautioned
 you in friendship, lest from officious tongues the tale had
 reached you with double aggravation.

Mrs. B. Proceed, Sir.

Stu. It is a debt due to my fame ; due to an injured wife too — We are both injured.

Mrs. B. How injured ? And who has injured us ?

Stu. My friend, your husband.

Mrs. B. You would resent for both then — But know, Sit, my injuries are my own, and do not need a champion.

Stu. Be not too hasty, Madam. I come not in resentment, but for acquittance. You thought me poor ; and to the feign'd distresses of a friend gave up your jewels.

Mrs. B. I gave them to a husband.

Stu. Who gave them to a —

Mrs. B. What, whom did he give them to ?

Stu. A mistress.

Mrs. B. No, on my life, he did not.

Stu. Himself confessed it, with curses on her avarice.

Mrs. B. I'll not believe it — He has no mistress ; or if he has, why is it told to me ?

Stu. To guard you against insults. He told me, that, to move you to compliance, he forged that letter, pretending I was ruin'd, ruin'd by him too. The fraud succeeded ; and what a trusting wife bestowed in pity, was lavished on a wanton.

Mrs. B. Then I am lost indeed ! and my afflictions are too powerful for me. His follies I have borne without upbraiding, and saw the approach of poverty without a tear — My affections, my strong affections, supported me through every trial.

Stu. Be patient, Madam.

Mrs. B. Patient ! The barbarous, ungrateful man ! And does he think that the tenderness of my heart is his best security for wounding it ? But he shall find that injuries such as these, can arm my weakness for vengeance and redress.

Stu. Ha ! then I may succeed. [Aside.] Redress is in your power.

Mrs. B. What redress ?

Stu. Forgive me, Madam, if, in my zeal to serve you, I hazard your displeasure. Think of your wretched state. Already want surrounds you — Is it in patience to bear that ? To see your helpless little one robbed of his birth-right ? A sister, too, with unavailing tears lamenting her lost

lost fortune? No comfort left you, but ineffectual pity from the few, outweigh'd by insults from the many.

Mrs. B. Am I so lost a creature? — Well, Sir, my redress?

Stu. To be resolv'd is to secure it. The marriage vow, once violated, is, in the sight of Heaven, dissolved — Start not, but hear me. 'Tis now the summer of your youth; time has not cropt the roses from your cheek, tho' sorrow long has washed them — Then use your beauty wisely, and, freed by injuries, fly from the cruellest of men, for shelter with the kindest.

Mrs. B. And who is he?

Stu. A friend to the unfortunate; a bold one too, who, while the storm is bursting on your brow, and lightning flashing from your eyes, dares tell you that he loves you.

Mrs. B. Would that these eyes had Heaven's own lightning, that, with a look, thus I might blast thee! Am I then fallen so low? Has poverty so humbled me, that I should listen to a hellish offer, and sell my soul for bread? Oh, villain, villain! — But now I know thee, and thank thee for the knowledge.

Stu. If you are wise, you shall have cause to thank me.

Mrs. B. An injured husband, too, shall thank thee.

Stu. Yet know, proud woman, I have a heart as stubborn as your own; as haughty and imperious; and as it loves, so can it hate.

Mrs. B. Mean, despicable villain! I scorn thee and thy threats. Was it for this that Beverley was false? that his too credulous wife should, in despair and vengeance, give up her honour to a wretch? But he shall know it, and vengeance shall be his.

Stu. Why send him for defiance then. Tell him I love his wife; but that a worthless husband forbids our union. I'll make a widow of you, and court you honourably.

Mrs. B. Oh, coward, coward! thy soul will shrink at him. Yet, in the thought of what may happen, I feel a woman's fears. Keep thy own secret, and begone. Who's there?

Enter Lucy.

Your absence, Sir, would please me.

Stu. I'll not offend you, Madam.

[*Exit Stukely with Lucy.*

Mrs. B. Why opens not the earth to swallow such a monster? Be conscience, then, his punisher, till Heaven, in mercy, gives him penitence, or dooms him in his justice.

Re-enter Lucy.

Come to my chamber, Lucy; I have a tale to tell thee, shall make thee weep for thy poor mistress.

Yet Heaven the guiltless sufferer regards; And whom it most afflicts it most rewards.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. Beverley, Charlotte, and Lewson.

CHARLOTTE.

THE smooth-tongu'd hypocrite!

Lew. But we have found him, and will requite him—Be cheerful, Madam; [*To Mrs. B.*] and for the insults of this ruffian you shall have ample retribution.

Mrs. B. But not by violence—Remember you have sworn it; I had been silent else.

Lew. You need not doubt me; I shall be cool as patience.

Mrs. B. See him to-morrow, then.

Lew. And why not now? By Heaven, the veriest worm that crawls is made of braver spirit than this Stukeley—Yet, for my promise, I'll deal gently with him—I mean to watch his looks—From those, and from his answers to my charge, much may be learnt. Next I'll to Bates, and sift him to the bottom: if I fail there, the gang is numerous, and for a bribe will each betray the other—Good night; I'll lose no time. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. B. These boisterous spirits, how they wound me! But reasoning is in vain. Come, Charlotte, we'll to our usual watch. The night grows late.

Char. I am fearful of events; yet pleased—To-morrow may relieve us. [*Going.*]

Enter Jarvis.

How now, good Jarvis?

Jar.

Jar. I have heard ill news, Madam.

Mrs. B. What news? Speak quickly.

Jar. Men are not what they seem. I fear me Mr. Stukely is dishonest.

Char. We know it, Jarvis. But what's your news?

Jar. That there's an action against my master, at his friend's suit.

Mrs. B. Oh, villain, villain! 'twas this he threatened then. Run to that den of robbers, Wilson's—Your master may be there. Entreat him home, good Jarvis. Say I have business with him—But tell him not of Stukely—It may provoke him to revenge—Haste, haste, good Jarvis.

[Exit *Jar.*]

Char. This minister of hell! Oh, I could tear him piece-meal!

Mrs. B. I am sick of such a world—Yet Heaven is just; and, in its own good time, will hurl destruction on such monsters.

[Exit.]

SCENE changes to Stukely's Lodgings

Enter Stukely and Bates meeting.

Bates. Where have you been?

Stu. Fooling my time away; playing my tricks, like a tame monkey, to entertain a woman—No matter where—I have been vexed and disappointed. Tell me of Beverley; how bore he his last shock?

Bates. Like one (so Dawson says) whose senses had been numb'd with misery. When all was lost, he fixed his eyes upon the ground, and stood some time, with folded arms, stupid and motionless; then snatching his sword, that hung against the wainscot, he sat him down, and with a look of fix'd attention, drew figures on the floor. At last, he started up, look'd wild, and trembled; and, like a woman seized with her sex's fits, laughed out aloud, while the tears trickled down his face—so left the room.

Stu. Why, this was madness.

Bates. The madness of despair.

Stu. We must confine him then. A prison would do well. [A knocking at the door.] Hark! that knocking may be his. Go that way down. [Exit *Bates.*]—Who's there?

Enter

Enter Lewson.

Lew. An enemy——an open and avowed one.

Stu. Why am I thus broke in upon? This house is mine, Sir; and should protect me from insult and ill-manners.

Lew. Guilt has no place of sanctuary; wherever found, 'tis virtue's lawful game. The fox's hold and tyger's den are no security against the hunter.

Stu. Your busines, Sir?

Lew. To tell you that I know you——Why this confusion? That look of guilt and terror? Is Beverley awake; or has his wife told tales? The man that dares like you, should have a soul to justify his deeds, and courage to confront accusers: not, with a coward's fear, to shrink beneath reproof.

Stu. Who waits there? *[Aloud, and in confusion.]*

Lew. By Heaven, he dies that interrupts us. *[Shutting the door.]* You should have weighed your strength, Sir; and then, instead of climbing to high fortune, the world had marked you for what you are, a little paltry villain.

Stu. You think I fear you.

Lew. I know you fear me. This is to prove it. *[Pulls him by the sleeve.]* You wanted privacy—A lady's presence took up your attention—Now we are alone, Sir. Why, what a wretch! *[Flings him from him.]* The vilest insect in creation will turn when trampled on; yet has this thing undone a man—by cunning and mean arts undone him. But we have found you, Sir; trac'd you through all your labyrinths. If you would save yourself, fall to confession: no mercy will be shewn else.

Stu. First prove me what you think me—till then, your threatenings are in vain—And for this insult, vengeance may yet be mine.

Lew. Infamous coward! why, take it now then—*[Draws, and Stukely retires.]* Alas, I pity thee!—Yet that a wretch like this should overcome a Beverley! It fills me with astonishment!—A wretch, so mean of soul, that even desperation cannot animate him to look upon an enemy. You should not have thus soar'd, Sir, unless, like others of your black profession, you had a sword to keep the fools in awe, your villainy has ruin'd.

Stu. Villainy! 'Twere best to curb this licence of your tongue;

tongue; for know, Sir, while there are laws, this outrage on my reputation will not be borne with.

Lew. Laws! Dar'st thou seek shelter from the laws, those laws which thou and thy infernal crew live in the constant violation of? Talk'st thou of reputation too, when, under friendship's sacred name, thou hast betrayed, robbed, and destroyed?

Stu. Ay, rail at gaming; 'tis a rich topic, and affords noble declamation — Go, preach against it in the city: you'll find a congregation in every tavern. If they should laugh at you, fly to my Lord, and sermonize it there: he'll thank you, and reform.

Lew. And will example sanctify a vice? No, wretch; the custom of my Lord, or of the cit that apes him, cannot excuse a breach of law, or make the gamester's calling reputable.

Stu. Rail on, I say — But is this zeal for beggared Beverley? Is it for him that I am treated thus? No; he and his wife might both have groaned in prison, had but the sister's fortune escaped the wreck, to have rewarded the disinterested love of honest Mr. Lewson.

Lew. How I detest thee for the thought! But thou art lost to every human feeling. Yet let me tell thee, and may it wring thy heart, that tho' my friend is ruined by thy snares, thou hast unknowingly been kind to me.

Stu. Have I? It was, indeed, unknowingly.

Lew. Thou hast assisted me in love; given me the merit that I wanted; since, but for thee, my Charlotte had not known 'twas her dear self I sigh'd for, and not her fortune.

Stu. Thank me, and take her then.

Lew. And, as a brother to poor Beverley, I will pursue the robber that has stripped him, and snatch him from his gripe.

Stu. Then know, imprudent man, he is within my gripe; and should my friendship for him be slandered once again, the hand that has supplied him, shall fall and crush him.

Lew. Why, now there's a spirit in thee! This is indeed to be a villain! But I shall reach thee yet — Fly where thou wilt, my vengeance shall pursue thee — And

Beverley

Beverley shall yet be sav'd; be sav'd from thee, thou monster! nor owe his rescue to his wife's dishonour. [Exit.

Stu. [Paus'g.] Then ruin has enclosed me. Curse on my coward heart! I would be bravely villainous; but 'tis my nature to shrink at danger, and he has found me. Yet fear brings caution, and that security — More mischief must be done to hide the past — Look to yourself, officious Lewson — there may be danger stirring — How now, Bates?

Enter Bates.

Bates. What is the matter? 'Twas Lewson, and not Beverley, that left you — I heard him loud — You seem alarmed too.

Stu. Ay, and with reason — We are discovered.

Bates. I feared as much; and therefore cautioned you. But you were peremptory.

Stu. Thus tools talk ever; spending their idle breath on what is past, and trembling at the future. We must be active. Beverley, at worst, is but suspicious; but Lewson's genius, and his hate to me, will lay all open. Means must be found to stop him.

Bates. What means?

Stu. Dispatch him — Nay, start not — Desperate occasions call for desperate deeds — We live but by his death.

Bates. You cannot mean it?

Stu. I do, by Heaven.

Bates. Good night, then.

Stu. Stay. I must be heard, then answered. Perhaps the motion was too sudden; and human weakness starts at murder, tho' strong necessity compels it. I have thought long of this; and my first feelings were like yours; a foolish conscience awed me, which soon I conquered. The man that would undo me, Nature cries out, undo. Brutes know their foes by instinct; and where superior force is given, they use it for destruction. Shall man do less? Lewson pursues us to our ruin; and shall we, with the means to crush him, fly from our hunter, or turn and tear him? 'Tis folly even to hesitate.

Bates. He has obliged me, and I dare not.

Stu. Why, live to shame, then, to beggary and punishment. You would be privy to the deed, yet want the soul

foul to act it. Nay, more, had my designs been levelled at his fortune, you had stepped in the foremost—And what is life without its comforts? Those you would rob him of, and by a lingering death, add cruelty to murder. Henceforth adieu to half-made villains—There's danger in them. What you have got is yours; keep it, and hide with it—I'll deal my future bounty to those that merit it.

Bates. What's the reward?

Stu. Equal division of our gains. I swear it, and will be just.

Bates. Think of the means then.

Stu. He's gone to Beverley's—Wait for him in the street—'Tis a dark night, and fit for mischief. A dagger would be useful.

Bates. He sleeps no more.

Stu. Consider the reward. When the deed's done, I have farther business with you. Send Dawson to me.

Bates. Think it already done—and so, farewell. [Exit.

Stu. Why, farewell Lewson, then; and farewell to my fears. This night secures me. I'll wait the event within. [Exit.

SCENE changes to the Street. Stage darkened.

Enter Beverley.

Bev. How like an out-cast do I wander? Loaded with every curse that drives the soul to desperation—The midnight robber, as he walks his rounds, sees by the glimmering lamp my frantic looks, and dreads to meet me. Whither am I going? My home lies there; all that is dear on earth it holds too; yet are the gates of death more welcome to me—I'll enter it no more—Who passes there? 'Tis Lewson—He meets me in a gloomy hour; and memory tells me he has been meddling with my fame.

Enter Lewson.

Lew. Beverley! Well met. I have been busy in your affairs.

Bev. So I have heard, Sir; and now must thank you as I ought.

Lew. To-morrow I may deserve your thanks. Late

as it is, I go to Bates. Discoveries are making that an arch villain trembles at.

Bev. Discoveries are made, Sir, that you shall tremble at. Where is this boasted spirit, this high demeanor, that was to call me to account? You say I have wrong'd my sister—Now say as much. But first be ready for defence, as I am for resentment. [Draws.

Lew. What mean you? I understand you not.

Bev. The coward's stale acquittance! who, when he spreads foul calumny abroad, and dreads just vengeance on him, cries out, What mean you? I understand you not.

Lew. Coward and calumny! Whence are those words? But I forgive, and pity you.

Bev. Your pity had been kinder to my fame. But you have traduced it; told a vile story to the public ear, that I have wronged my sister.

Lew. 'Tis false. Shew me the man that dares accuse me.

Bev. I thought you brave, and of a soul superior to low malice; but I have found you, and will have vengeance. This is no place for argument.

Lew. Nor shall it be for violence. Imprudent man! who, in revenge for fancied injuries, would pierce the heart that loves him. But honest friendship acts from itself, unmoved by slander or ingratitude. The life you 'thirst for, shall be employed to serve you.

' *Bev.* 'Tis thus you would compound then—First ' do a wrong beyond forgiveness, and, to redress it, load ' me with kindnesses unsolicited. I'll not receive it. ' Your zeal is troublesome.

' *Lew.* No matter. It shall be useful.

' *Bev.* It will not be accepted.

' *Lew.* It must. You know me not.

Bev. Yes, for the flanderer of my fame; who, under shew of friendship, arraigns me of injustice; buzzing in every ear foul breach of trust, and family dishonour.

Lew. Have I done this? Who told you so?

Bev. The world—'Tis talked of every where. It pleased you to add threats, too. You were to call me to account—Why, do it now, then: I shall be proud of such an arbiter.

Lew. Put up your sword, and know me better. I never injured you. The base suggestion comes from Stukely: I see him and his aims.

Bev. What aims? I'll not conceal it; 'twas Stukely that accused you.

Lew. To rid him of an enemy—Perhaps of two—He fears discovery, and frames a tale of falsehood, to ground revenge and murder on.

Bev. I must have proof of this.

Lew. Wait till to-morrow then.

Bev. I will.

Lew. Good night—I go to serve you—Forget what's past, as I do; and cheer your family with smiles. To-morrow may confirm them, and make all happy.

[*Exit.*]

Bev. [*Pausing.*] How vile, and how absurd is man! His boasted honour is but another name for pride, which easier bears the consciousness of guilt, than the world's just reproofs. But 'tis the fashion of the times; and in defence of falsehood and false honour men die martyrs: I knew not that my nature was so bad. [*Stands musing.*]

Enter Bates and Jarvis.

Jar. This way the noise was; and yonder's my poor master.

Bates. I heard him at high words with Lewson. The cause I know not.

Jar. I heard him too. Misfortunes vex him.

Bates. Go to him, and lead him home. But he comes this way—I'll not be seen by him. [Exit.]

Bev. [*Starting.*] What fellow's that? [*Seeing Jarvis.*] Art thou a murderer, friend?—Come, lead the way; I have a hand as mischievous as thine; a heart as desperate too—Jarvis!—To bed, old man; the cold will chill thee.

Jar. Why are you wandering at this late hour? Your sword drawn too?—For Heaven's sake, sheath it, Sir—the sight distracts me.

Bev. Whose voice was that?

[*Wildly.*]

Jar. 'Twas mine, Sir. Let me intreat you to give the sword to me.

Bev. Ay, take it—quickly take it—Perhaps I am not

so curs'd, but Heaven may have sent thee at this moment to snatch me from perdition.

Jar. Then I am bless'd.

Bev. Continue so, and leave me : my sorrows are contagious. No one is blefs'd that's near me.

Jar. I came to seek you, Sir.

Bev. And now thou hast found me, leave me — My thoughts are wild, and will not be disturbed.

Jar. Such thoughts are best disturbed.

Bev. I tell thee that they will not. Who sent thee hither?

Jar. My weeping mistress.

Bev. Am I so meek a husband then, that a commanding wife prescribes my hours, and sends to chide me for my absence? — Tell her I'll not return.

Jar. Those words would kill her.

Bev. Kill her! Would they not be kind, then? But she shall live to curse me — I have deserved it of her. Does she not hate me Jarvis?

Jar. Alas, Sir, forget your griefs, and let me lead you to her! The streets are dangerous.

Bev. Be wise, and leave me then. The night's black horrors are suited to my thoughts — These stones shall be my resting-place. [*Lies down.*] Here shall my soul brood o'er its miseries, till, with the fiends of hell, and guilty of the earth, I start and tremble at the morning's light.

Jar. For pity's sake, Sir — Upon my knees, I beg you to quit this place, and these sad thoughts — Let patience, not despair, possess you — Rise, I beseech you — There's not a moment of your absence, that my poor mistress does not groan for.

Bev. Have I undone her, and is she still so kind; [*Starting up.*] It is too much — My brain can't hold it — Oh, Jarvis, how desperate is that wretch's state, which only death or madness can relieve.

Jar. Appear his mind, good Heaven, and give him resignation! Alas, Sir, could beings in the other world perceive the events of this, how would your parents blessed spirits grieve for you even in Heaven! — Let me conjure you, by their honoured memories; by the sweet innocence of your yet helpless child, and by the ceaseless sorrows

rows of my poor mistress, to rouse your manhood, and struggle with these griefs.

Bev. Thou virtuous, good old man ! thy tears and thy intreaties have reached my heart, thro' all its miseries.

Jar. Be but resigned, Sir, and happiness may yet be yours.

' *Bev.* Pr'ythee, be honest, and do not flatter misery.

' *Jar.* I do not, Sir.'—Hark ! I hear voices—Come this way ; we may reach home unnoticed.

Bev. ' Well, lead me then.'—Unnoticed, didst thou say ? Alas, I dread no looks but of those wretches I have made at home ! Oh, had I listened to thy honest warnings, no earthly blessing had been wanting to me !—I was so happy, that even a wish for more than I possessed, was arrogant presumption. But I have warred against the power that blessed me ; and now am forced to the hell I merit.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E changes to Stukely's.

Enter Stukely and Dawson.

Stu. Come hither, Dawson. My limbs are on the rack, and my soul shivers in me, till this night's business be complete. Tell me thy thoughts ; is Bates determined, or does he waver ?

Daw. At first he seemed irresolute ; wished the employment had been mine ; and muttered curses on his coward hand, that trembled at the deed.

Stu. And did he leave you so ?

Daw. No ; we walked together, and, sheltered by the darkness, saw Beverley and Lewson in warm debate. But soon they cooled, and then I left them to hasten hither ; but not till 'twas resolved Lewson should die.

Stu. Thy words have given me life. That quarrel, too, was fortunate ; for, if my hopes deceive me not, it promises a grave to Beverley.

Daw. You misconceive me. Lewson and he were friends.

Stu. But my prolific brain shall make them enemies. If Lewson falls, he falls by Beverley. An upright jury shall decree it. Ask me no question ; but do as I direct. This writ, [*Takes out a pocket-book.*] for some days past, I have treasured here, till a convenient time called for its

use. That time is come. Take it, and give it to an officer. It must be served this instant. [Gives a paper.

Daw. On Beverley!

Stu. Look at it. 'Tis for the sums that I have lent him.

Daw. Must he to prison then?

Stu. I asked obedience, not replies. This night a jail must be his lodging. 'Tis probable he's not gone home yet. Wait at his door, and see it executed.

Daw. Upon a beggar? He has no means of payment.

Stu. Dull and insensible! If Lewson dies, who was it killed him? Why, he that was seen quarrelling with him: and I, that knew of Beverley's intents, arrested him in friendship—A little late, perhaps; but 'twas a virtuous act, and men will thank me for it. Now, Sir, you understand me?

Daw. Most perfectly; and will about it.

Stu. Haste, then; and when 'tis done, come back and tell me.

Daw. Till then, farewell.

[Exit.

Stu. Now tell thy tale, fond wife! And, Lewson, if again thou canst insult me, 'I'll kneel, and own thee for my master.'

Not avarice now, but vengeance fires my breast,
And one short hour must make me curs'd or bless'd.

[Exeunt.

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

S C E N E, continues.

Enter Stukely, Bates, and Dawson.

BATES.

POOR Lewson!—But I told you enough last night. The thought of him is horrible to me.

Stu. In the street, did you say? And no one near him?

Bates. By his own door; he was leading me to his house. I pretended business with him, and stabbed him to the heart, while he was reaching at the bell.

Stu. And did he fall so suddenly?

Bates.

Bates. The repetition pleases you, I see. I told you he fell without a groan.

Stu. What heard you of him this morning?

Bates. That the watch found him in their rounds, and alarmed the servants. I mingled with the crowd just now, and saw him dead in his own house—The sight terrified me.

Stu. Away with terrors, till his ghost rise and accuse us. We have no living enemy to fear, unless 'tis Beverley; and him we have lodged safe in prison.

Bates. Must he be murdered too?

Stu. No; I have a scheme to make the law his murderer. At what hour did Lewson fall?

Bates. The clock struck twelve as I turned to leave him. 'Twas a melancholy bell, I thought, tolling for his death.

Stu. The time was lucky for us—Beverley was arrested at one, you say? [To Dawson.]

Daw. Exactly.

Stu. Good. We'll talk of this presently. The women were with him, I think?

Daw. And old Jarvis. I would have told you of them last night, but your thoughts were too busy. 'Tis well you have a heart of stone; the tale would melt it else.

Stu. Out with it then.

Daw. I traced him to his lodgings; and, pretending pity for his misfortunes, kept the door open, while the officers seized him. 'Twas a damn'd deed—but no matter—I followed my instructions.

Stu. And what said he?

Daw. He upbraided me with treachery, called you a villain, acknowledged the sums you had lent him, and submitted to his fortune.

Stu. And the women—

Daw. For a few minutes astonishment kept them silent. They looked wildly at one another, while the tears streamed down their cheeks. But rage and fury soon gave them words; and then, in the very bitterness of despair, they cursed me, and the monster that had employed me.

Stu. And you bore it with philosophy?

Daw. 'Till the scene changed, and then I melted. I ordered the officers to take away their prisoner. The

women shrieked, and would have followed him ; but we forbade them. 'Twas then they fell upon their knees, the wife fainted, the sister raving, and both, with all the eloquence of misery, endeavouring to soften us. I never felt compassion till that moment ; and had the officers been moved like me, we had left the business undone, and fled with curses on ourselves. But their hearts were steeled by custom. The tears of beauty and the pangs of affection were beneath their pity. They tore him from their arms, and lodged him in prison, with only Jarvis to comfort him.

Stu. There let him lie, 'till we have farther business with him—‘ And for you, Sir, let me hear no more of your compassion—A fellow nursed in villainy, and employed from childhood in the business of hell, should have no dealings with compassion.

Daw. Say you so, Sir?—You should have named the devil that tempted me—

Stu. 'Tis false. I found you a villain, and therefore employed you—but no more of this—We have embarked too far in mischief to recede. Lewson is dead, and we are all principals in his murder. Think of that—There's time enough for pity when ourselves are out of danger—Beverley still lives, though in a gaol—His ruin will sit heavy on him ; and discoveries may be made to undo us all. Something must be done, and speedily—You saw him quarrelling with Lewson in the street last night. [To Bates.

Bat. I did ; his steward, Jarvis, saw him too.

Stu. And shall attest it. Here's matter to work upon—An unwilling evidence carries weight with him. Something of my design I have hinted t'you before—Beverley must be the author of this murder ; and we the parties to convict him—But how to proceed will require time and thought—Come along with me ; the room within is fitted for privacy—But no compassion, Sir— [To Dawson.] We wan't leisure for't—This way.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. Beverley and Charlotte.

Mrs. Pev. No news of Lewson yet?

Char.

Char. None. He went out early, and knows not what has happened.

Mrs. B. The clock strikes eight—I'll wait no longer.

Char. Stay but 'till Jarvis comes. He has sent twice to stop us 'till we see him.

Mrs. B. I have no life in this separation—Oh, what a night was last night! I would not pass another such to purchase worlds by it—My poor Beverley too? What must he have felt! The very thought distracts me—To have him torn at midnight from me!—A loathsome prison his habitation! A cold damp room his lodging! The bleak winds perhaps blowing upon his pillow! No fond wife to lull him to his rest! and no reflections but to wound and tear him!—'Tis too horrible—I wanted love for him, or they had not forced him from me. They should have parted soul and body first—I was too tame.

Char. You must not talk so. All that we could we did; and Jarvis did the rest—The faithful creature will give him comfort. Why does he delay coming!

Mrs. B. And there's another fear. His poor master may be claiming the last kind office from him—His heart perhaps is breaking.

Char. See where he comes---His looks are cheerful too.

Enter Jarvis.

Mrs. B. Are tears then cheerful? Alas, he weeps! Speak to him, Charlotte—I have no tongue to ask him questions.

Char. How does your master, Jarvis?

Jar. I am old and foolish, Madam; and tears will come before my words—But don't you weep; [To Mrs. Bev.] I have a tale of joy for you.

Mrs. B. What tale?—Say but he's well, and I have joy enough.

Jar. His mind too shall be well—all shall be well—I have news for him, that will make his poor heart bound again—Fie upon old age---How childish it makes me! I have a tale of joy for you, and my tears drown it.

Char. Shed them in showers then, and make haste to tell it.

Mrs. B. What is it, Jarvis?

Jar.

Jar. Yet why should I rejoice when a good man dies ?
Your uncle, Madam, died yesterday.

Mrs. B. My uncle !—Oh, heavens !

Char. How heard you of his death ?

Jar. His steward came express, Madam ?—I met him in the street, enquiring for your lodgings—I should not rejoice perhaps—but he was old, and my poor master a prisoner—Now he shall live again—Oh, 'tis a brave fortune ! and 'twas death to me to see him a prisoner.

Char. Where left you the steward ?

Jar. I would not bring him hither, to be a witness of your distresses ; and besides, I wanted, once before I die, to be the messenger of joy t'you. My good master will be a man again.

Mrs. B. Haste, haste then ; and let us fly to him !—We are delaying our own happiness.

Jar. I had forgot a coach, Madam, and Lucy has ordered one.

Mrs. B. Where was the need of that ? The news has given me wings.

Char. I have no joy, 'till my poor brother shares it with me. How did he pass the night, Jarvis ?

Jar. Why now, Madam, I can tell you. Like a man dreaming of death and horrors. When they led him to his cell—For 'twas a poor apartment for my master—He flung himself upon a wretched bed, and lay speechless 'till day-break. A figh now and then, and a few tears that followed those sighs, were all that told me he was alive. I spoke to him, but he would not hear me ; and when I persisted, he raised his hand at me, and knit his brow so—I thought he would have struck me.

Mrs. B. Oh, miserable ! But what said he, Jarvis ? Or was he silent all night ?

Jar. At day-break he started from the bed, and looking wildly at me, asked who I was. I told him, and bid him be of comfort—Begone, old wretch, says he—I have sworn never to know comfort—My wife ! my child ! my sister ! I have undone them all, and will know no comfort—Then falling upon his knees, he imprecated curses upon himself.

Mrs. B. This is too horrible !—But you did not leave him so ?

Char.

Char. No, I am sure he did not.

Jar. I had not the heart, Madam. By degrees I brought him to himself. A shower of tears came to his relief; and he called me his kindest friend, and begged forgiveness of me, like a child. My heart throbbed so, I could not speak to him. He turned from me for a minute or two, and suppressing a few bitter sighs, enquired after his wretched family---‘ Wretched was his word, Madam’ —Asked how you bore the misery of last night—If you had the goodness to see him in prison: and then begged me to hasten to you. I told him he must be more himself first—He promised me he would; and bating a few sudden intervals, he became composed and easy ---And then I left him; but not without an attendant ---a servant in the prison, whom I hired to wait upon him—’Tis an hour since we parted—I was prevented in my haste to be the messenger of joy to you.’

Mrs. B. What a tale is this?—But we have staid too long—‘ A coach is needless.

‘ *Char.* Hark! I hear one at the door.’

Jar. ‘ And Lucy comes to tell us’—We’ll away this moment.

Mrs. B. To comfort him or die with him. [Exeunt.

‘ SCENE changes to Stukely’s Lodgings.

‘ Enter Stukely, Bates, and Dawson.

‘ *Stu.* Here’s presumptive evidence at least---or if we want more, why we must swear more. But all unwillingly---We gain credit by reluctance---I have told you how to proceed. Beverley must die—We hunt him in view now, and must not slacken in the chace. ’Tis either death for him, or shame and punishment for us. Think of that, and remember your instructions— You, Bates, must to the prison immediately. I would be there but a few minutes before you; and you, Dawson, must follow in a few minutes after. So here we divide—But answer me; are you resolved upon this business like men?

‘ *Bates.* Like villains rather—But you may depend upon us.

‘ *Stu.* Like what we are then—You make no answer, Dawson—Compassion, I suppose, has seised you.

‘ *Daw*

‘ Daw. No; I have disclaimed it—My answer is
‘ Bates’s—You may depend upon me.

‘ Stu. Consider the reward! Riches and security! I
‘ have sworn to divide with you to the last shilling—So
‘ here we separate ’till we meet in prison—Remember
‘ your instructions and be men. [Exeunt.

SCENE changes to a prison.

Beverley is discovered sitting. After a short pause, he starts up, and comes forward.

Rev. Why, there’s an end then. I have judged deliberately, and the result is death. How the self-murderer’s account may stand, I know not. But this I know—the load of hateful life oppresses me too much—The horrors of my soul are more than I can bear—[Offers to kneel.] Father of mercy!—I cannot pray—Despair has laid his iron hand upon me, and sealed me for perdition—Conscience! Conscience! thy clamours are too loud—Here’s that shall silence thee. [Takes a vial out of his pocket, and looks at it.] Thou art most friendly to the miserable. Come then, thou cordial for sick minds—Come to my heart. [Drinks.] Oh, that the grave would bury me in memory as well as body! For if the soul sees and feels the sufferings of those dear ones it leaves behind, the Everlasting has no vengeance to torment it deeper—I’ll think no more on’t—Reflection comes too late—Once there was a time for’t—but now ’tis past.—Who’s there?

Enter Jarvis.

Jar. One that hoped to see you with better looks—Why d’you turn so from me? I have brought comfort with me. And see who comes to give it welcome.

Rev. My wife and sister! Why, ’tis but one pang more then, and farewell world. [Aside.]

Enter Mrs. Beverley and Charlotte.

Mrs. B. Where is he? [Runs and embraces him.] Oh, I have him! I have him! And now they shall never part us more—I have news, love, to make you happy for ever—But don’t look coldly on me.

Char. How is it, brother?

Mrs. B. Alas! he hears us not—Speak to me, love. I have no heart to see you thus.

Rev.

Bev. 'Nor I to bear the sense of so much shame'—
This is a sad place !

Mrs. B. We came to take you from it. To tell you the world goes well again. That Providence has seen our sorrows, and sent the means to help them—Your uncle died yesterday.

Bev. My uncle!—No, do not say so!—Oh, I am sick at heart!

Mrs. B. Indeed!—I meant to bring you comfort.

Bev. Tell me he lives then—If you would bring me comfort, tell me he lives.

Mrs. B. And if I did—I have no power to raise the dead—He died yesterday.

Bev. And I am heir to him?

Jar. To his whole estate, Sir—But bear it patiently—pray bear it patiently.

Bev. Well, well---[*Pausing.*] Why fame says I am rich then?

Mrs. B. And truly so---Why do you look so wildly?

Bev. Do I? The news was unexpected. But has he left me all?

Jar. All, all, Sir---He could not leave it from you.

Bev. I am sorry for it.

‘*Char.* Sorry! Why sorry?

‘*Bev.* Your uncle’s dead, Charlotte.

‘*Char.* Peace be with his soul then—Is it so terrible that an old man should die?

‘*Bev.* He should have been immortal.’

Mrs. B. ‘Heaven knows I wished not for his death.

‘Twas the will of Providence that he should die’—
Why are you disturbed so?

Bev. Has death no terrors in it?

Mrs. B. Not an old man’s death. Yet if it troubles you, I wish him living.

Bev. And I, with all my heart.

‘*Char.* Why, what’s the matter?

‘*Bev.* Nothing---How heard you of his death?

‘*Mrs. B.* His steward came express. Would I had never known it!’

Bev. ‘Or had heard it one day sooner’---For I have a tale to tell, shall turn you into stone; or, if the power of speech remain, you shall kneel down and curse me.

Mrs. B. Alas ! What tale is this ? And why are we to curse you---I'll bless you for ever.

Bev. No ; I have deserved no blessings. The world holds not such another wretch. All this large fortune, this second bounty of heaven, that might have healed our sorrows, and satisfied our utmost hopes, in a cursed hour I sold last night.

Char. Sold ! How sold ?

Mrs. B. Impossible !---It cannot be !

Bev. That devil Stukely, with all hell to aid him, tempted me to the deed. To pay false debts of honour, and to redeem past errors, I sold the reversion---Sold it for a scanty sum, and lost it among villains.

Char. Why, farewell all then.

Bev. Liberty and life---Come kneel and curse me.

Mrs. B. Then hear me, Heaven ! [Kneels.] Look down with mercy on his sorrows ! Give softness to his looks, and quiet to his heart ! Take from his memory the sense of what is past, and cure him of despair ! On me ! on me ! if misery must be the lot of either, multiply misfortunes ! I'll bear them patiently, so he is happy ! These hands shall toil for his support ! These eyes be lifted up for hourly blessings on him ! And every duty of a fond and faithful wife be doubly done to chear and comfort him !---So hear me ! So reward me ! [Rises.]

Bev. I would kneel too, but that offended heaven would turn my prayers into curses. ' What have I to ask for ! I, who have shook hands with hope ? Is it for length of days that I should kneel ? No ; my time is limited. Or is it for this world's blessings upon you and yours ? To pour out my heart in wishes for a ruined wife, a child and sister ? Oh, no !' for I have done a deed to make life horrible to you---

' *Mrs. B.* Why horrible ? Is poverty so horrible ?---The real wants of life are few. A little industry will supply them all---And cheerfulness will follow---It is the privilege of honest industry, and we'll enjoy it fully.

' *Bev.* Never, never---Oh, I have told you but in part. The irrevocable deed is done.'

' *Mrs. B.* What deed ?---' And why do you look so at me ?

' *Bev.*

‘ *Bev.* A deed that dooms my soul to vengeance---
‘ That seals your misery here, and mine hereafter.

‘ *Mrs. B.* No, no ; you have a heart too good for’t---
‘ Alas ! he raves, Charlotté---His looks too terrify me
‘ ---Speak comfort to him---He can have done no deed
‘ of wickedness.

‘ *Char.* And yet I fear the worst---What is it, brother ?

Bev. A deed of horror.

‘ *Jar.* Ask him no questions, Madam---This last mis-
fortune has hurt his brain. A little time will give him
patience.

Enter Stukely.

Bev. Why is this villain here ?

Stu. To give you liberty and safety. There, Madam’s,
his discharge. [Giving a paper to *Mrs. Beverley*.] Let
him fly this moment. The arrest last night was meant
in friendship ; but came too late.

Char. What mean you, Sir ?

Stu. The arrest was too late, I say ; I would have kept
his hands from blood, but was too late.

Mrs. B. His hands from blood !---Whose blood ?---Oh,
wretch ! wretch !

Stu. From Lewson’s blood.

Char. No, villain ! Yet what of Lewson ? Speak
quickly.

Stu. You are ignorant then ! I thought I heard the
murderer at confession.

Char. What murderer ?---And who is murdered ? Not
Lewson ?---Say he lives, and I’ll kneel and worship you.

Stu. In pity, so I would ; but that the tongues of all
cry murder. I came in pity, not in malice ; to save the
brother, not kill the sister. Your Lewson’s dead.

Char. O horrible ! ‘ Why who has killed him ? And
‘ yet it cannot be. What crime had he committed that
‘ he should die ? Villain ! he lives ! he lives ! and shall
‘ revenge these pangs.

‘ *Mrs. B.* Patience, sweet Charlotte.

‘ *Char.* O, ’tis too much for patience !

‘ *Mrs. B.* He comes in pity, he says ! O, execrable
‘ villain ! The friend is killed then, and this the mur-
‘ derer ?

Bev. Silence, I charge you.—Proceed, Sir.

Stu. No. Justice may stop the tale—and here's an evidence.

Enter Bates.

Bates. The news, I see, has reached you. But take comfort, Madam. [To Char.] There's one without enquiring for you.—Go to him, and lose no time.

Char. O misery! misery! [Exit.]

Mrs. B. Follow her, Jarvis. If it be true that Lewson's dead, her grief may kill her.

Bates. Jarvis must stay here, Madam. I have some questions for him.

Stu. Rather let him fly. His evidence may crush his master.

Bev. Why ay; this looks like management.

Bates. He found you quarrelling with Lewson in the street last night. [To Bev.]

Mrs. B. No; I am sure he did not.

Jar. Or if I did—

Mrs. B. 'Tis false, old man—They had no quarrel; there was no cause for quarrel.

Bev. Let him proceed, I say—O! I am sick! sick!

—Reach a chair. [He sits down.]

Mrs. B. You droop and tremble, love.—Your eyes are fixed too—Yet you are innocent. If Lewson's dead, you killed him not.

Enter Dawson.

Stu. Who sent for Dawson?

Bates. 'Twas I—We have a witness too, you little think of—Without there!

Stu. What witness?

Bates. A right one. Look at him.

Enter Lewson and Charlotte.

Stu. Lewson! O villains! villains!

[To Bates and Dawson.]

Mrs. B. Risen from the dead! Why, this is unexpected happiness!

Char. Or is't his ghost? [To Stukely.] That fight would please you, Sir.

Jar. What riddle's this?

Bev. Be quick and tell it—My minutes are but few.

Mrs. B. Alas! why so? You shall live long and happily.

Lew. While shame and punishment shall rack that viper. [Pointing to Stukely.] The tale is short—I was too busy in his secrets, and therefore doomed to die. Bates, to prevent the murder, undertook it—I kept aloof to give it credit.

Char. And give me pangs unutterable.

Lew. I felt 'em all, and would have told you—But vengeance wanted ripening. The villain's scheme was but half executed. The arrest by Dawson followed the supposed murder—And now, depending on his once wicked associates, he comes to fix the guilt on Beverley.

Mrs. B. O! execrable wretch!

Bates. Dawson and I are witnesses of this.

Lew. And of a thousand frauds. His fortune ruined by sharpers and false dice; and Stukely sole contriver and possessor of all.

Daw. Had he but stopped on this side murder, we had been villains still.

Mrs. B. Thus Heaven turns evil into good: and by permitting sin, warns men to virtue.

Lew. Yet punishes the instrument. So shall our laws; tho' not with death. But death were mercy. Shame, beggary, and imprisonment, unpitied misery, the stings of conscience, and the curses of mankind shall make life hateful to him—till at last, his own hand end him—How does my friend? [To Bev.]

Bev. Why well. Who's he that asks me?

Mrs. B. 'Tis Lewson, love—Why do you look so at him?

Bev. They told me he was murdered.

[Wildly.]

Mrs. B. Ay; but he lives to save us.

Bev. Lend me you hand—The room turns round.

Mrs. B. O Heaven!

Lew. This villain here disturbs him. Remove him from his sight—And for your lives see that you guard him. [Stukely is taken off by Dawson and Bates.] How is it, Sir?

Bev. 'Tis here—and here [Pointing to his head and heart.] And now it tears me!

Mrs. B. You feel convulsed too——What is't disturbs you?

‘ *Lew.* This sudden turn of joy perhaps——He wants rest too——Last night was dreadful to him. His brain is giddy.

‘ *Char.* Ay, never to be cured——Why, brother!—O! I fear! I fear!

‘ *Mrs. B.* Preserve him, Heaven!——My love! my life! look at me!——How his eyes flame!

Bev. A furnace rages in this heart——‘ I have been too hasty.

‘ *Mrs. B.* Indeed!——O me! O me!——Help, Jarvis! Fly, fly for help! Your master dies else.——Weep not, but fly! [Exit Jar.] What is this hasty deed?——Yet do not answer me——My fears have guessed.

‘ *Bev.* Call back the messenger——‘ Tis not in medicine's power to help me.

‘ *Mrs. B.* Is it then so?

‘ *Bev.* Down, restless flames!——[Laying his hand on his heart.] down to your native hell—There you shall rack me——O! for a pause from pain!

‘ *Mrs. B.* Help, Charlotte! Support him, Sir! [To Lewson.] This is a killing fight!

‘ *Bev.* That pang was well—It has numbed my sens—Where's my wife?——Can you forgive me, love?

Mrs. B. Alas! for what?

‘ *Bev.* [Starting again.] And there's another pang—Now all is quiet—Will you forgive me?

‘ *Mrs. B.* I will——tell me for what?

Bev. For meanly dying.

Mrs. B. No——do not say it.

‘ *Bev.* As truly as my soul must answer it.——Had Jarvis staid this morning, all had been well. But pressed by shame——pent in a prison——tormented with my pangs for you——driven to despair and madness——I took the advantage of his absence, corrupted the poor wretch he left to guard me, and——swallowed poison.

Mrs. B. O fatal deed!

Char. Dreadful and cruel!

Bev.

Bev. Ay, most accursed——And now I go to my account. ‘ This rest from pain brings death ; yet ’tis ‘ Heaven’s kindness to me. I wished for ease, a moment’s ease, that cool repentance and contrition might ‘ soften vengeance.’——Bend me, and let me kneel. [They lift him from his chair, and support him on his knees.] I’ll pray for you too. ‘ Thou Power that madest me, hear me ! If for a life of frailty, and this too hasty deed of death, thy justice dooms me, here I acquit the sentence. But if enthroned in mercy where thou fittest, thy pity has beheld me, send me a gleam of hope ; that in these last and bitter moments my soul may taste of comfort ! and for these mourners here, O ! let their lives be peaceful, and their deaths happy !——‘ Now raise me.’

[They lift him to the chair.

Mrs. B. Restore him, Heaven ! Stretch forth thy arm omnipotent, and snatch him from the grave !——O save him ! save him ! or let me die too.

Bev. Alas ! that prayer is fruitless. Already death has seized me——Yet Heaven is gracious——I asked for hope, as the bright presage of forgiveness, and like a light, blazing thro’ darkness, it came and cheared me——‘ Twas all I lived for,’ and now I die.

Mrs. B. Not yet !——Not yet !——Stay but a little and I’ll die too.’

Bev. No ; live, I charge you.——We have a little one. Tho’ I have left him, you will not leave him. To Lewson’s kindness I bequeath him.——Is not this Charlotte ? We have lived in love, tho’ I have wronged you. Can you forgive me, Charlotte ?

Char. Forgive you !——O my poor brother !

Bev. ‘ Lend me your hand, love.——So——raise me——No——’twill not be——My life is finished——’ O ! for a few short moments, to tell you how my heart bleeds for you——That even now, thus dying as I am, dubious and fearful of hereafter, my bosom pang is for your miseries, Support her, Heaven !——And now I go——O, mercy ! mercy !

[Dies.

Lew. Then all is over——How is it, Madam ?——My poor Charlotte too !

Enter

‘Enter Jarvis.

‘*Jar.* How does my master, Madam? Here’s help at hand——

‘Am I too late then? [Seeing Bev.]

‘*Char.* Tears! tears! why fall you not? —

‘*Wretched sister!* — Speak to her, Lewson —

Her grief is speechless.

Lew. Remove her from this sight—Go to her, Jarvis—Lead and support her. Sorrow like hers forbids complaint—Words are for lighter griefs—Some ministering angel bring her peace! [Jar. and Char. lead her off.] And thou, poor breathless corpse, may thy departed soul have found the rest it prayed for! Save but one error, and this last fatal deed, thy life was lovely. Let frailer minds take warning; and from example learn, that want of prudence is want of virtue.

Follies, if uncontroul’d, of every kind,
Grow into passions, and subdue the mind;
With sense and reason hold superior strife,
And conquer honour, nature, fame and life.

[Exitant.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

Written by a FRIEND.

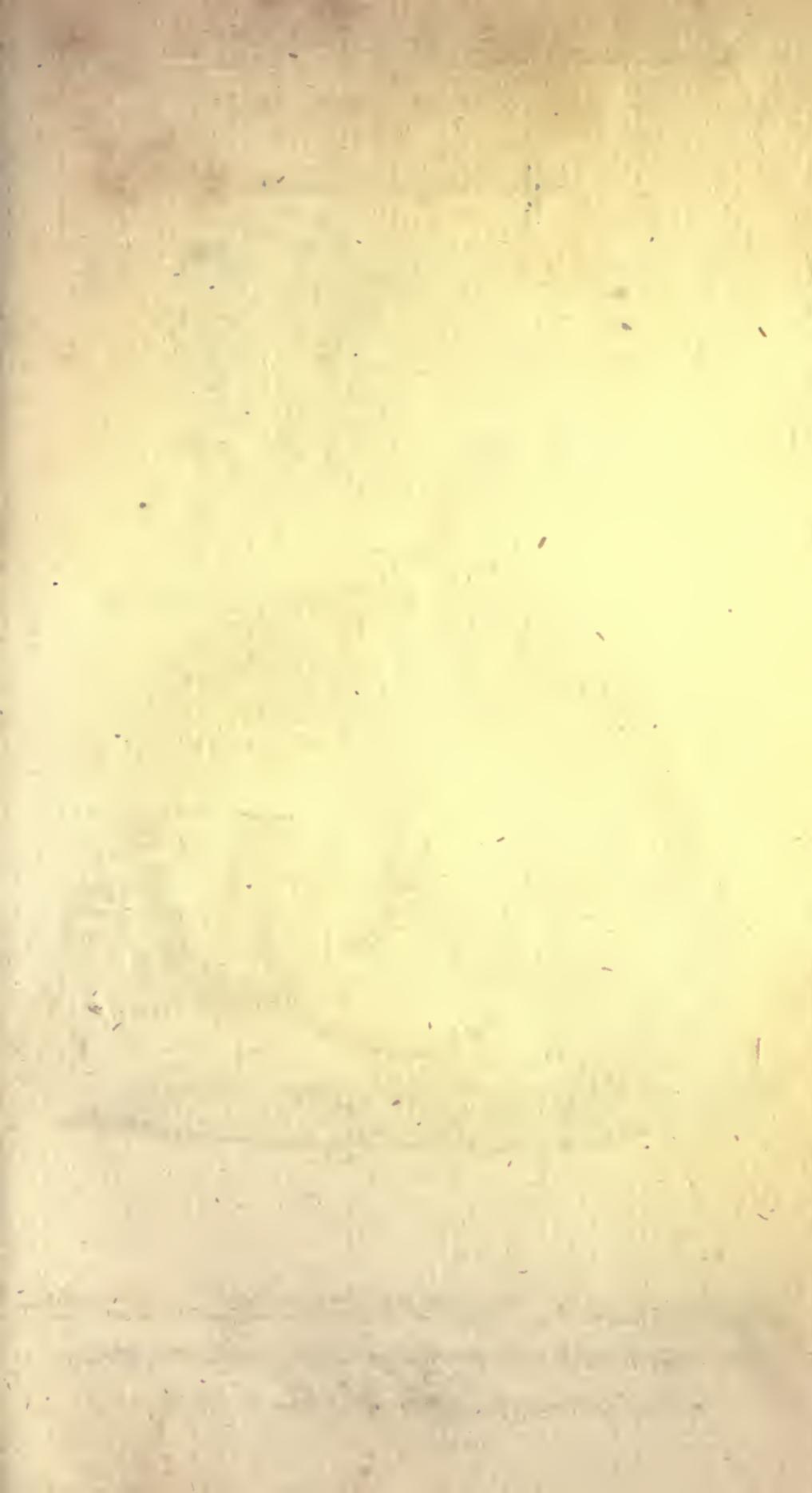
ON ev'ry gamester in th' Arabian nation,
'Tis said that Mahomet denounc'd damnation :
But in return for wicked cards and dice,
He gave 'em black-ey'd girls in Paradise.
Should he thus preach, good countrymen, to you,
His converts wou'd, I fear, be mighty few,
So much your hearts are set on sordid gain,
The brightest eyes around you shine in vain.
Should the most Heav'nly beauty bid you take her,
You'd rather hold——two aces and a maker.
By your example, our poor sex drawn in,
Is guilty of the same unnat'r al sin ;
The study now of ev'ry girl of parts,
Is how to win your money, not your hearts.
O ! in what sweet, what ravishing delights
Our beaux and belles together pass their nights !
By ardent perturbations kept a-wake,
Each views with longing eyes the other's—stake.
The smiles and graces are from Britain flown,
Our Cupid is an errant sharper grown,
And Fortune sits on Cytherea's throne.
In all these things, tho' women may be blam'd,
Sure men, the wiser men, should be ashame'd !
And'tis a horrid scandal, I declare,
That four strange queens should rival all the fair ;
Four jilts with neither beauty, wit, nor parts,
O shame ! have got possession of their hearts :
And those bold sluts, for all their queenly pride,
Have play'd loose tricks, or else they're much bely'd.
Cards were at first for benefits design'd,
Sent to amuse, and not enslave the mind.
From good to bad how easy the transition !
For what was pleasure once, is now perdition.
Fair ladies, then, these wicked gamesters shun,
Whoever weds one, is, you see, undone.

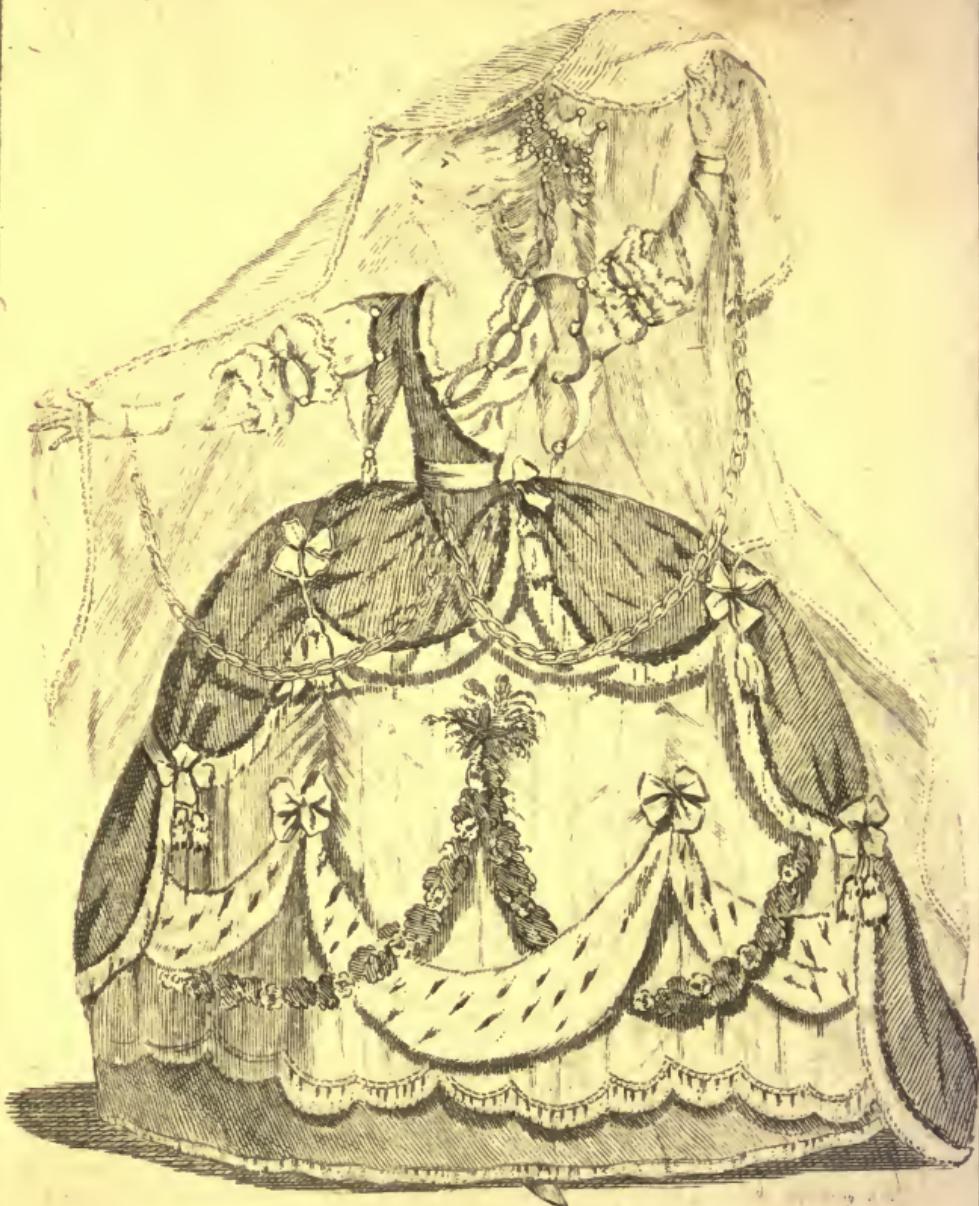
CEΛΛΕΙΟ
CEΛΛΕΙΟ











M^r. HARTLEY in the Character of ALMEYDA
Now if thou dar'st behold Almeyda's face

BELL'S EDITION.

—
DON SEBASTIAN,
KING OF PORTUGAL.

A TRAGEDY,

As written by DRYDEN:

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book.

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS.

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

—*Nec tarda senectus*
Debilitat vires animi, mutatque vigorem.

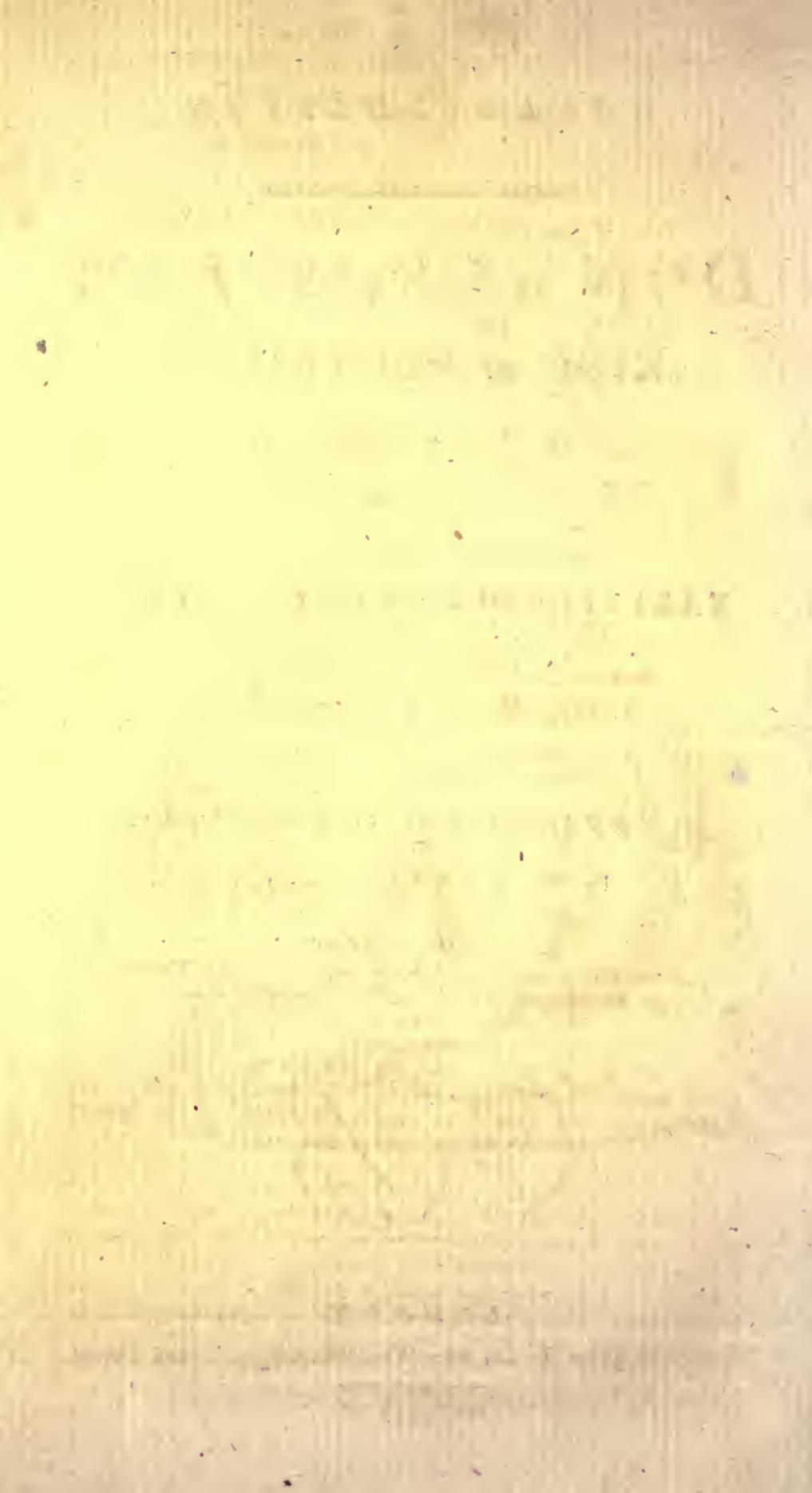
VIRG.



—
LONDON:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

—
MDCCLXXVII.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
 P H I L I P,
 Earl of *Leicester*, &c.

EAR be it from me (my most noble Lord) to think, that any thing which my meanness can produce, should be worthy to be offered to your patronage ; or that ought which I can say of you should recommend you farther, to the esteem of good men in this present age, or to the veneration which will certainly be paid you by posterity. On the other side, I must acknowledge it a great presumption in me, to make you this address ; and so much the greater, because by the common suffrage even of contrary parties, you have been always regarded as one of the first persons of the age, and yet no one writer has dared to tell you so : whether we have been all conscious to ourselves that it was a needless labour to give this notice to mankind, as all men are ashamed to tell stale news ; or that we were justly diffident of our own performances, as even Cicero is observed to be in awe when he writes to Atticus ; where knowing himself overmatched in good sense, and truth of knowledge, he drops the gaudy train of words, and is no longer the vain-glorious orator. From whatever reason it may be, I am the first bold offender of this kind : I have broken down the fence, and ventured into the holy grove : how I may be punished for my profane attempt, I know not ; but I wish it may not be of ill omen to your Lordship ; and that a crowd of bad writers do not rush into the quiet of your recesses after me. Every man in all changes of government, which have been, or may possibly arrive, will agree, that I could not have offered my incense, where it could be so well deserved. For you, my Lord, are secure in your own merit ; and all parties, as they rise uppermost, are sure to court you in their turns ; 'tis a tribute which has ever been paid your virtue : the leading men still bring their bullion to your mint, to receive the stamp of their intrinsic value, that they may afterwards hope to pass with human kind. They rise and fall in the variety of revolutions ; and are sometimes great, and therefore wise in men's opinions, who must court them for their interest : but the reputation of their parts most commonly follows their success ; few of them are wise, but as they are in power : because indeed, they have no sphere of their own, but like the moon in the Copernican system of the world, are whirled about by the motion of a greater planet. This it is to be ever busy ; neither to give rest to their fellow-creatures, nor, which is more wretchedly ridiculous, to themselves : tho' truly, the latter is a kind of justice, and giving mankind a due revenge, that they will

not permit their own hearts to be at quiet, who disturb the repose of all beside them. Ambitious meteors ! how willing they are to set themselves upon the wing ; taking every occasion of drawing upward to the sun : not considering that they have no more time allowed them for their mounting, than the short revolution of a day ; and that when the light goes from them, they are of necessity to fall. How much happier is he (and who he is I need not say, for there is but one phoenix in an age) who centering on himself, remains immoveable, and smiles at the madness of the dance about him ? He possesses the midst, which is the portion of safety and content : he will not be higher, because he needs it not ; but by the prudence of that choice, he puts it out of Fortune's power to throw him down. 'Tis confess, that if he had not so been born, he might have been too high for happiness ; but not endeavouring to ascend, he secures the native height of his station from envy ; and cannot descend from what he is, because he depends not on another. What a glorious character was this once in Rome ! I should say in Athens, when in the disturbances of a state as mad as ours, the wise Pomponius transported all the remaining wisdom and virtue of his country, into the sanctuary of peace and learning. But I would ask the world (for you, my Lord, are too nearly concerned to judge this cause) whether there may not yet be found a character of a noble Englishman equally shining with that illustrious Roman ? Whether I need to name a second Atticus ; or whether the world has not already prevented me, and fixed it there without my naming ? Not a second with a *longo sed proximus intervallo*, not a young Marcellus, flattered by a poet into the resemblance of the first, with a *frens læta parum, & dejecto lumina vultu*, and the rest that follows, *si qua fata aspera rumpas, Tu Marcellus eris* : but a person of the same stamp and magnitude ; who owes nothing to the former, besides the word Roman, and the superstition of reverence, devolving on him by the precedence of eighteen hundred years : one who walks by him with equal paces, and shares the eyes of beholders with him : one who had been first, had he first lived ; and in spite of doating veneration is still his equal. Both of them born of noble families, in unhappy ages of change and tumult : both of them retiring from affairs of state ; yet not leaving the commonwealth, till it had left itself : but never returning to public business when they had once quitted it, tho' courted by the heads of either party. But who would trust the quiet of their lives with the extravagancies of their countrymen, when they were just in the giddiness of their turning ; when the ground was tottering under them at every moment ; and none could guess whether the next heave of the earthquake would settle them on the first foundation, or swallow it ? Both of them knew mankind exactly well ; for both of them began that study in themselves ; and there they found the best part of human composition, the worst they learned by long experience of the folly, ignorance, and immorality of most beside them ; their philosophy on both sides, was not wholly speculative, for that is barren, and produces nothing but vain ideas of things which cannot possibly be known, or if they could, yet would only terminate in the

understanding ; but it was a noble, vigorous, and practical philosophy, which exerted itself in all the offices of pity, to those who were unfortunate, and deserved not so to be. The friend was always more considered by them than the cause : and an Octavius, or an Antony in distress, were relieved by them, as well as a Brutus or a Cassius. For the lowermost party, to a noble mind, is ever the fittest object of good-will. The eldest of them, I will suppose for his honour, to have been of the academic sect, neither dogmatist nor stoic ; if he were not, I am sure he ought in common justice, to yield the precedence to his younger brother. For stiffness of opinion is the effect of pride, and not of philosophy : 'tis a miserable presumption of that knowledge which human nature is too narrow to contain. And the ruggedness of a stoic is only a silly affectation of being a god : to wind himself up by pullies to an insensibility of suffering ; and at the same time to give the lie to his own experience, by saying he suffers not, what he knows he feels. True philosophy is certainly of a more pliant nature, and more accommodated to human use : *Homo sum; humani a me nihil alienum puto.* A wise man will never attempt an impossibility ; and such it is to strain himself beyond the nature of his being : either to become a deity, by being above suffering, or to debase himself into a stock or stone, by pretending not to feel it. To find in ourselves the weaknesses and imperfections of our wretched kind, is surely the most reasonable step we can make towards the compassion of our fellow-creatures. I could give examples of this kind in the second Atticus. In every turn of state, without meddling on either side, he has always been favourable and assisting to oppressed merit. The praises which were given by a great poet to the late Queen mother on her rebuilding Somerset palace, one part of which was fronting to the mean houses on the other side of the water, are as justly his :

*For, the distress'd, and the afflicted lie
Most in his thoughts, and always in his eye.*

Neither has he so far forgot a poor inhabitant of his suburbs, whose best prospect is on the garden of Leicester House ; but that more than once he has been offering him his patronage, to reconcile him to a world, of which his misfortunes have made him weary. There is another Sidney still remaining, though there can never be another Spenser to deserve the favour. But one Sidney gave his patronage to the applications of a poet ; the other offered it unasked. Thus, whether as a second Atticus, or a second Sir Philip Sidney, the latter in all respects will not have the worse of the comparison ; and if he will take up with the second place, the world will not so far flatten his modesty, as to seat him there, unless it be out of a deference of manners, that he may place himself where he pleases at his own table.

I may therefore safely conclude, that he, who by the consent of all men, bears so eminent a character, will out of his inborn nobleness forgive the presumption of this address. 'Tis an unfinished picture, I confess, but the lines and features are so like, that it cannot be mistaken for any other ; and without writing any name under it, every beholder must cry out, at the first sight, This was designed for

Atticus; but the bad artist has cast too much of him into shades. But I have this excuse, that even the greatest masters commonly fall short of the best faces. They may flatter an indifferent beauty; but the excellencies of nature can have no right done to them: For there both the pencil and the pen are overcome by the dignity of the subject; as our admirable Waller has expressed it,

The heroe's race transcends the poet's thought.

There are few in any age who can bear the load of a dedication; for where praise is undeserved, it is satire: though satire on folly is now no longer a scandal to any one person, where a whole age is dipt together; yet I had rather undertake a multitude one way, than a single Atticus the other; for 'tis easier to descend than 'tis to climb. I should have gone ashamed out of the world, if I had not at least attempted this address, which I have long thought owing: and if I had never attempted, I might have been vain enough to think I might have succeeded in it. Now I have made the experiment, and have failed, through my unworthiness, I may rest satisfied, that either the adventure is not to be achieved, or that it is reserved for some other hand.

Be pleased, therefore, since the family of Attici is and ought to be above the common forms of concluding letters, that I may take my leave in the words of Cicero to the first of them: *Me, O Pomponi, valde pœnitet vivere: tantum te oro, ut quoniam me ipse semper amasti, ut eodem amore sis; ego nimis idem sum. Inimici mei viae mibi, non me ipsum ademerunt. Cura, Attice, ut valeas.*

Dabam Cal.

Jan. 1690.

P R E F A C E.

WHETHER it happened thro' a long disuse of writing, that I forgot the usual compass of a play; or that by crowding it with characters and incidents, I put a necessity upon myself of lengthening the main action, I know not: but the first day's audience sufficiently convinced me of my error; and that the poem was insupportably too long. 'Tis an ill ambition of poets, to please an audience with more than they can bear: and, supposing that we wrote as well as vainly we imagine ourselves to write, yet we ought to consider, that no man can bear to be long tickled. There is a nauseousness in a city-feast, when we are to sit four hours after we are cloyed. I am therefore in the first place to acknowledge, with all manner of gratitude, their civility, who were pleased to endure it with so much patience, to be weary with so much good-nature and silence, and not to explode an entertainment, which was designed to please them; or discourage an author, whose misfortunes have once more brought him, against his will, upon the stage. While I continue in these bad circumstances (and truly I see very little probability of coming out) I must be obliged to write; and if I may still hope for the same kind usage, I shall the less repent of that hard necessity. I write not this out of any expectation to be pitied; for I have enemies enough to wish me yet in a worse condition: but give me leave to say, that if I can please by writing, as I shall endeavour it, the town may be somewhat obliged to my misfortunes, for a part of their diversion. Having been longer acquainted with the stage, than any poet now living, and having observed how difficult it was to please; that the humours of comedy were almost spent, that love and honour (the mistaken topicks of tragedy) were quite worn out, that the theatres could not support their charges, that the audience forsook them, that young men without learning set up for judges, and that they talked loudest who understood the least: all these discouragements had not only weaned me from the stage, but had also given me a loathing of it. But enough of this: the difficulties continue; they increase, and I am still condemned to dig in those exhausted mines. Whatever fault I next commit, rest assured it shall not be that of too much length. Above twelve hundred lines have been cut off from this tragedy since it was first delivered to the actors. They were indeed so judiciously lopped by Mr. Betterton, to whose care and excellent action I am equally obliged, that the connexion of the story was not lost; but on the other side, it was impossible to prevent some part of the action from being precipitated and coming on without that due preparation, which is required to all great events; as in particular, that of raising the mobile in the beginning of the fourth act; which a man of Benducar's cool character, could not naturally attempt, without taking all those precautions, which he foresaw

would be necessary to render his design successful. On this consideration I have replaced those lines through the whole poem ; and thereby restored it to that clearness of conception, and (if I may dare to say) that lustre and masculiné vigour in which it was first written. 'Tis obvious to every understanding reader, that the most poetical parts, which are description, images, similitudes, and moral sentences, are those which of necessity were to be pared away, when the body was swollen into too large a bulk for the representation of the stage. But there is a vast difference betwixt a public entertainment on the theatre, and a private reading in the closet : in the first we are confined to time, and though we talk not by the hour-glass, yet the watch often drawn out of the pocket warns the actors that their audience is weary : in the last every reader is judge of his own convenience ; he can take up the book and lay it down at his pleasure ; and find out those beauties of propriety in thought and writing, which escaped him in the tumult and hurry of representing. And I dare boldly promise for this play, that in the roughness of the numbers and cadences (which I assure was not casual, but so designed) you will see somewhat more masterly arising to your view, than in most, if not any of my former tragedies. There is a more noble daring in the figures, and more suitable to the loftiness of the subject ; and besides this, some newnesses of English, translated from the beauties of modern tongues, as well as from the elegancies of the Latin ; and here and there some old words are sprinkled, which for their significance and sound deserved not to be antiquated, such as we often find in Sallust amongst the Roman authors, and in Milton's Paradise amongst ours ; tho' perhaps the latter, instead of sprinkling, has dealt them with too free a hand, even sometimes to the obscuring of his sense.

As for the story or plot of the tragedy, 'tis purely fiction ; for I take it up where the history has laid it down. We are assured by all writers of those times, that Sebastian, a young prince of great courage and expectation, undertook that war partly upon a religious account, partly at the solicitation of Muley-Mahomet, who had been driven out of his dominions by Abdelmelech, or as others call him, Muley-Moluch, his nigh kinsman, who descended from the same family of the Xeriffs, whose fathers, Hamet and Mahomet had conquered that empire with joint forces, and shared it betwixt them after their victory : that the body of Don Sebastian was never found in the field of battle ; which gave occasion for many to believe, that he was not slain : that some years after, when the Spaniards, with a pretended title, by force of arms, had usurped the crown of Portugal from the house of Braganza, a certain person, who called himself Don Sebastian, and had all the marks of his body and features of his face, appeared at Venice, where he was owned by some of his countrymen ; but being seized by the Spaniards, was first imprisoned, then sent to the gallies, and at last put to death in private. 'Tis most certain, that the Portuguese expected his return for almost an age together after that battle ; which is at least a proof of their extream love to his memory : and the usage which they had from their new conquerors, might possibly make

make them so extravagant in their hopes and wishes for their old master.

This ground-work the history afforded me, and I desire no better to build a play upon it ; for where the event of a great action is left doubtful, there the poet is left master : he may raise what he pleases on that foundation, provided he makes it of a piece, and according to the rule of probability. From hence I was only obliged that Sebastian should return to Portugal no more ; but at the same time I had him at my own disposal, whether to bestow him in Africk, or in any other corner of the world, or to have closed the tragedy with his death ; and the last of these was certainly the most easy, but for the same reason, the least artful ; because, as I have somewhere said, the poison and the dagger are still at hand to butcher a hero, when a poet wants the brains to save him. It being therefore only necessary, according to the laws of the *Drama*, that Sebastian should no more be seen upon the throne, I leave it for the world to judge, whether or no I have disposed of him according to art, or have bungled up the conclusion of his adventure. In the drawing of his character I forgot not piety, which any one may observe to be one principal ingredient of it ; even so far as to be a habit in him ; though I shew him once to be transported from it by the violence of a sudden passion, to endeavour a self-murder. This being pre-supposed, that he was religious, the horror of his incest, though innocently committed, was the best reason which the stage could give for hindering his return. 'Tis true, I have no right to blast his memory with such a crime : but declaring it to be fiction, I desire my audience to think it no longer true, than while they are seeing it represented : for that once ended, he may be a saint for ought I know ; and we have reason to presume he is. On this supposition, it was unreasonable to have killed him : for the learned Mr. Rymer has well observed, that in all punishments we are to regulate ourselves by poetical justice ; and according to those measures an involuntary sin deserves not death : from whence it follows, that to divorce himself from the beloved object, to retire into a desert, and deprive himself of a throne, was the utmost punishment which a poet could inflict, as it was also the utmost reparation which Sebastian could make. For what relates to Almeyda, her part is wholly fictitious : I know it is the surname of a noble family in Portugal, which was very instrumental in the restoration of Don John de Braganza, father to the most illustrious and most pious princess our Queen Dowager. The French author of a novel called Don Sebastian, has given that name to an African lady of his own invention, and makes her sister to Muley-Mahomet. But I have wholly changed the accidents, and borrowed nothing but the supposition, that she was beloved by the King of Portugal. Though if I had taken the whole story, and wrought it up into a play, I might have done it exactly according to the practice of almost all the ancients ; who were never accused of being plagiaries, for building their tragedies on known fables. Thus Augustus Cæsar wrote an *Ajax*, which was not the less his own, because Euripides had written a play before him on that subject. Thus of late years Corneille writ an *OEdipus* after Sophocles ; and I have designed one after him, which I wrote with Mr. Lee : yet neither the French poet stole from the

Greek, nor we from the Frenchman. 'Tis the contrivance, the new turn, and new characters, which alter the property, and make it ours. The *Materia Poetica* is as common to all writers, as the *Materia Medica* to all physicians. Thus in our *Chronicles*, Daniel's history is still his own, though Matthew Paris, Stow, and Hollingshed writ before him; otherwise we must have been content with their dull relations, if a better pen had not been allowed to come after them, and writ his own account after a new and better manner.

I must further declare freely, that I have not exactly kept to the three mechanic rules of unity: I knew them, and had them in my eye, but followed them only at a distance: for the genius of the English cannot bear too regular a play, we are given to variety, even to a debauchery of pleasure. My scenes are therefore sometimes broken, because my under-plot required them so to be: though the general scene remains of the same castle; and I have taken the time of two days, because the variety of accidents, which are here represented, could not naturally be supposed to arrive in one: But to gain a greater beauty, 'tis lawful for a poet to supersede a less.

I must likewise own, that I have somewhat deviated from the known history, in the dearth of Muley-Moluch, who, by all relations, died of a fever in the battle, before his army had wholly won the field: but if I have allowed him another day of life, it was because I stood in need of so shining a character of brutality, as I have given him; which is indeed the same with that of the present emperor Muley-Ishmael, as some of our English officers, who have been in his court, have credibly informed me.

I have been listening what objections had been made against the conduct of the play, but found them all so trivial, that if I should name them, a true critic would imagine that I played booty, and only raised up fantoms for myself to conquer. Some are pleased to say the writing is dull: but *æstatem habet, de se loquatur*. Others, that the double poison is unnatural; let the common received opinion, and Ausonius's famous epigram answer that. Lastly, a more ignorant sort of creatures than either of the former, maintain that the character of Dorax is not only unnatural, but inconsistent with itself; let them read the play and think again; and if yet they are not satisfied, cast their eyes on that chapter of the wise Montaigne, which is intitled, *de l'Inconstance des Actions humaines*. A longer reply is what those cavillers deserve not; but I will give them and their fellows to understand, that the earl of Dorset was pleased to read the tragedy twice over before it was acted; and did me the favour to send me word, that I had written beyond any of my former plays; and that he was displeased any thing should be cut away. If I have not reason to prefer his single judgment to a whole faction, let the world be judge; for the opposition is the same with that of Lucan's hero against an army; *concurrere bellum, atque virum*. I think I may modestly conclude, that whatever errors there may be, either in the design, or writing of this play, they are not those which have been objected to it. I think also, that I am not yet arrived to the age of doting; and that I have given so much application to this poem, that I could not probably let it run into many gross absurdities, which may caution my enemies from too rash a censure; and may

may also encourage my friends, who are many more than I could reasonably have expected, to believe their kindness has not been very undeservedly bestowed on me. This is not a play that was huddled up in haste: and to shew it was not, I will own, that besides the general moral of it, which is given in the four last lines, there is also another moral, couched under every one of the principal parts and characters; which a judicious critic will observe, though I point not to in this preface. And there may be also some secret beauties in the decorum of parts, and uniformity of design, which my puny judges will not easily find out: let them consider in the last scene of the fourth act, whether I have not preserved the rule of decency, in giving all the advantage to the royal character, and in making Dorax first submit: perhaps too they may have thought, that it was thro' indigence of characters, I have given the same to Sebastian and Almeyda; and consequently made them alike in all things but their sex. But let them look a little deeper into the matter, and they will find that this identity of character in the greatness of their souls, was intended for a preparation of the final discovery, and that the likeness of their nature, was a fair hint to the proximity of their blood.

To avoid the imputation of too much vanity (for all writers, and especially poets, will have some) I will give but one other instance, in relation to the uniformity of the design. I have observed, that the English will not bear a thorough tragedy; but are pleased, that it should be lightened with under-parts of mirth. It had been easy for me to have given my audience a better course of comedy, I mean a more diverting, than that of Antonio and Morayma. But I dare appeal even to my enemies, if I, or any man, could have invented one which had been more of a piece, and more depending on the serious part of the design. For what could be more uniform, than to draw from out of the members of a captive court, the subject of a comical entertainment? To prepare this episode, you see Dorax giving the character of Antonio, in the beginning of the play, upon his first sight of him at the lottery; and to make the dependance, Antonio is engaged in the fourth act for the deliverance of Almeyda; which is also prepared by his being first made a slave to the captain of the rabble.

I should beg pardon for these instances; but perhaps they may be of use to future poets, in the conduct of their plays: At least if I appear too positive, I am growing old, and thereby in possession of some experience, which men in years will always assume for a right of talking. Certainly if a man can ever have reason to set a value on himself, 'tis when his ungenerous enemies are taking the advantage of the times upon him, to ruin him in his reputation. And therefore for once, I will make bold to take the counsel of my old master, Virgil.

Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.

P R O L O G U E.

Sent to the Author by an unknown Hand, and proposed to be
Spoken by Mrs. Mountford, dressed like an Officer.

*BRIGHT beauties who in awful circle sit,
And you grave synod of the dreadful pit,
And you the upper-tire of popgun wit,*

*Pray ease me of my wonder, if you may :
Is all this crowd barely to see the play,
Or is't the poet's execution-day ?*

*His breath is in your bands I will presume,
But I advise you to defer his doom,
Till you have got a better in his room ;*

*And don't maliciously combine together,
As if in spite and spleen you were come bither ;
For he has kept the pen, tho' lost the feather.*

*And on my honour, ladies, I avow,
This play was writ in charity to you :
For such a dearth of wit who ever knew ?*

*Sure 'tis a judgment on this sinful nation,
For the abuse of so great dispensation :
And therefore I resolve to change vocation.*

*For want of petty-coat I've put on buff,
To try what may be got by lying rough :
How think you, Sirs, is it not well enough ?*

*Of bully-critics I a troop would lead ;
But one reply'd, Thank you, there's no such need,
I at Groom-Porter's, Sir, can safer bleed.*

*Another, who the name of danger loathes,
Wou'd be wou'd go, and swore me forty oaths,
But that his horses were in body-clothes.*

*A third cry'd, Damn my blood, I'd be content
To push my fortune, if the parliament
Wou'd but recall Claret from banishment.*

*A fourth (and I have done) made this excuse,
I'd draw my sword in Ireland, Sir, to chuse ;
Had not their women gouty legs and wore no shoes.*

*Well, I may march, thought I, and fight, and trudge,
But of these blades the devil a man will budge ;
They there would fight, e'en just as here they judge.*

*Here they will pay for leave to find a fault,
But when their honour calls, they can't be bought ;
Honour in danger, blood and wounds is sought.*

Loft Virtue, whither fled, or where's thy dwelling
Who can reveal? at least 'tis past my telling,
Unless thou art embark'd for Iniskilling.

On carrion-tits those sparks denounce their rage,
In boot of wisp and Leinster frie engage:
What would you do in such an equipage?

The siege of Derry does you gallants threaten:
Not out of errant shame of being beaten,
As fear of wanting meat, or being eaten.

Were wit like honour to be won by fighting,
How few just judges would there be of writing.
Then you would leave this villainous back-biting.

Your talents lie how to express your spight,
But where is he knows how to praise aright?
You praise like cowards, but like critics fight.

Ladies, be wise, and wean these yearling calves,
Who in your service too are mere faux-braves,
They judge and write, and fight, and —— love by halves.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by a WOMAN.

THE judge remov'd, tho' he's no more my Lord,
May plead at bar, or at the council-board:
So may cast poets write; there's no pretension
To argue loss of wit, from loss of pension.
Your looks are cheerful; and in all this place
I see not one, that wears a damning face.
The British nation is too brave, to shew
Ignoble vengeance on a vanquish'd foe.
At least be civil to the wretch imploring;
And lay your paws upon him, without roaring:
Suppose our poet was your foe before;
Yet now, the bus'ness of the field is o'er;
Tis time to let your civil-wars alone,
When troops are into winter-quarters gone.
Love was alike to Latian and to Phrygian;
And you well know, a play's of no religion.
Take good advice and please yourselves this day;
No matter from what bands you have the play.
Among good fellows every health will pass,
That serves to carry round another glass:
When with full bowls of Burgundy you dine,
Tho' at the mighty monarch you repine,
You grant him still most Christian in his wine.

Thus far the poet: but his brains grow addle,
And all the rest is purely from my noddle;

You've seen young ladies at the senate-door,
 Prefer petitions, and your grace implore:
 However grave the legislators were,
 Their cause went ne'er the worse for being fair.
 Reasons as weak as theirs, perhaps, I bring;
 But I could bribe you with as good a thing.
 I heard him make advances of good nature;
 That be, for once, wou'd fbeath his cutting satire:
 Sign but his peace, he wou'st be'll ne'er again.
 The sacred names of fops, and bas's profane,
 Strike up the bargain quickly; for I swear,
 As times go now, he offers very fair.
 Be not too hard on him with statutes neither,
 Be kind; and do not set your teeth together,
 To stretch the laws, as coblers do their leather.
 Horses by papists are not to be ridden;
 But sure the Muse's horse was ne'er forbidden.
 For in no rate-book it was ever found
 That Pegasus was valued at five pound:
 Fine him to daily drudging and inditing:
 And let him pay his taxes out in writing.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Don Sebastian, king of Portugal, —
 Muley Moluch, emperor of Barbary, —
 Dorax, a noble Portuguese, now a renegade, formerly Don Alonzo de Sylvera, Alcade, or Governor of Alcazar, —
 Benducar, chief minister and favourite of the Emperor, —
 The Mufti Abdallah, —
 Muley Zeydan, brother to the Emperor, —
 Don António, a young, noble, amorous, Portuguese, now a slave, —
 Don Alvarez, an old counsellor to Don Sebastian, now a slave also, —
 Mustapha, captain of the rabble, —
 Orchan, —

Covent-Garden.
 Mr. Smith.
 Mr. Gardner.

Mr. Bensley.
 Mr. Thompson.
 Mr. Quick.
 Mr. Owenson.

Mr. Lewis.
 Mr. Hull.
 Mr. Dunstall.
 Mr. Bates.

W O M E N.

Almeyda, a captive Queen of Barbary, —
 Morayma, daughter to the Mufti, —
 Jobayma, chief wife to the Mufti, —
 Two Merchants.
 Rabble.
 A Servant to Benducar.
 A Servant to the Mufti.

Mrs. Hartley.
 Mrs. Mattocks.
 Mrs. Green.

S C E N E in the castle of Alcazar.

DON SEBASTIAN.

* * * The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

The SCENE at *Alcazar*, representing a Market-place under the Castle.

Enter Muley-Zeydan, and Benducar.

MULEY-ZEYDAN.

NOW Africa's long wars are at an end,
And our parch'd earth is drench'd in Christian
My conquering brother will have slaves enow [blood ;
To pay his cruel vows for victory.

What hear you of Sebastian, king of Portugal ?

Ben. He fell among a heap of slaughter'd Moors ;
Tho' yet his mangled carcase is not found.

The rival of our threaten'd empire, Mahomet,
Was hot pursu'd ; and in the general rout,
Mistook a swelling current for a ford,

‘ And in Mucazar's flood was seen to rise : ’

Thrice was he seen ; at length, his courser plung'd,
And threw him off ; the waves whelm'd over him,
And, helpless in his heavy arms, he drown'd.

M. Zeyd. Thus then, a doubtful title is extinguish'd ;
Thus Moluch, still the favourite of fate,
Swims in a sanguine torrent to the throne ;
As if our prophet only work'd for him,
The heavens and all the stars his hired servants,
As Muley-Zeydan were not worth their care,
And younger brothers but the dross of nature.

Ben. Be still, and learn the soothing arts of courts ;
Adore his fortune, mix with flattering crowds,
And when they praise him most, be you the loudest :

Your brother is luxurious, close, and cruel,
 Generous by fits, but permanent in mischief.

The shadow of a discontent would ruin us;

We must be safe before we can be great:

These things observ'd, leave me to shape the rest.

‘ M. Zeyd. You have the key ; he opens inward to you.

‘ Ben. So often try'd, and ever found so true,

‘ Has given me trust, and trust has given me means

‘ Once to be false for all. I trust not him ;

‘ For now his ends are serv'd, and he grown absolute,

‘ How am I sure to stand, who serv'd those ends ?

‘ I know your nature open, mild and grateful ;

‘ In such a prince the people may be bless'd,

‘ And I be safe.

‘ M. Zeyd. My father ! [Embracing him.

‘ Ben. My future king, auspicious Muley-Zeydan,

‘ Shall I adore you ? No, the place is public ;

‘ I worship you within, the outward act

‘ Shall be reserv'd till nations follow me,

‘ And Heav'n shall envy you the kneeling world.

You know th' alcade of Alcazar, Dorax ?

M. Zeyd. The gallant renegade you mean ?

Ben. The same :

‘ That gloomy outside, like a rusty chest,

‘ Contains the shining treasure of a soul,

‘ Resolv'd and brave : he has the soldiers' hearts,

‘ And time shall make him ours.

M. Zeyd. He's just upon us.

Ben. I know him 'from afar,' By the long stride, and by the sudden port.

Retire, my Lord :

Wait on your brother's triumph, yours is next ;

His growth is but a wild and fruitless plant ;

I'll cut his barren branches to the stock,

And graft you on to bear.

M. Zeyd. My oracle ! [Exit M. Zeyd.

Ben. Yes, to delude your hopes, poor credulous fool,

To think that I would give away the fruit

Of so much toil, such guilt, and such perdition :

‘ If I am damn'd, it shall be for myself :

‘ This easy fool must be my stale, set up

‘ To catch the people's eyes ; he's tame and merciful ;

‘ Him

- Him I can manage, till I make him odious
- By some unpopular act, and then dethrone him?

Enter Dorax.

Now, Dorax—

Dor. Well, Benducar!

Ben. Bare Benducar!

Dor. Thou wouldest have titles; take them then, chief
First hangman of the state. [minister,

Ben. Some call me favourite.

Dor. What's that, his favourite?

• Thou art too old to be a catamite.

Now, pr'ythee, tell me, and abate thy pride,
Is not Benducar, bare, a better name
In a friend's mouth, than all those gaudy titles,
Which I disdain to give the man I love.

Ben. But always out of humour—

Dor. I have cause;

Though all mankind is cause enough for satire.

Ben. Why then thou hast reveng'd thee on mankind:
They say, in fight thou hadst a thirsty sword,
And well 'twas glutted there.

Dor. I spitted frogs, I crush'd a heap of emmets,
A hundred of them to a single soul,
And that but scanty weight too. The great devil
Scarce thank'd me for my pains; ' he swallows vulgar
• Like whipp'd cream, feels them not in going down.'

Ben. Brave renegade! couldst thou not meet Sebastian?
Thy master had been worthy of thy sword.

Dor. My master! By what title?
Because I happen'd to be born where he
Happen'd to be king? And yet I serv'd him;
Nay, I was fool enough to love him too.
You know my story, how I was rewarded
For fifteen hard campaigns, still hoop'd in iron,
And why I turn'd Mahometan. I'm grateful;
But whosoever dares to injure me,
Let that man know, I dare to be reveng'd.

Ben. Still you run off from bias; say, what moves
Your present spleen?

Dor. You mark'd not what I told you;
I kill'd not one that was his Maker's image;
I met with none but vulgar two-legg'd brutes;

Sebastian was my aim ; he was a man :
 Nay, though he hated me, and I hate him,
 Yet I must do him right ; ' he was a man,'
 Above man's height, ev'n tow'ring to divinity ;
 Brave, pious, generous, great, and liberal ;
 Just, as the scales of heaven that weigh the seasons.
 He lov'd his people ; him they idoliz'd ;
 And thence proceeds my mortal hatred to him,
 That thus unblameable to all besides,
 He err'd to me alone.
 His goodness was diffus'd to human kind,
 And all his cruelty confin'd to me.

Ben. You could not meet him then ?

Dor. No, though I sought

Where ranks fell thickest ; 'twas, indeed, the place
 To seek Sebastian. Through a track of death
 I follow'd him, by groans of dying foes ;
 But still I came too late ; for he was flown,
 Like lightning, swift before me to new slaughters.
 I mow'd a-cross, and made irregular harvest,
 Defac'd the pomp of battle ; but in vain ;
 For he was still supplying death elsewhere.
 This mads me, that, perhaps, ignoble hands
 Have overlaid him ; for they could not conquer.
 Murder'd by multitudes, whom I alone
 Had right to slay. I too would have been slain,
 That, catching hold upon his flitting ghost,
 I might have robb'd him of his opening heaven,
 And dragg'd him down with me, spite of predestination.

Ben. 'Tis of as much import as Afric's worth,
 To know what came of him, and of Almeyda,
 ' The sister of the vanquish'd Mahomet,
 ' Whose fatal beauty to her brother drew
 ' The land's third part, as Lucifer did Heaven's.'

Dor. ' I hope she dy'd in her own female calling,
 ' Choak'd up with man, and gorg'd with circumcision.
 As for Sebastian, we must search the field,
 And where we see a mountain of the slain,
 Send one to climb, and looking down below,
 There he shall find him at his manly length,
 With his face up to heaven, in the red monument
 Which his true sword has digg'd.

Ben.

Ben. Yet we may possibly hear farther news ;
For while our Africans pursu'd the chace,
The captain of the rabble issued out,
With a black, shirtless train, to spoil the dead,
And seize the living.

Dor. Each of them an host,
A million strong of vermin, every villain :
No part of government, but lords of anarchy,
Chaos of power, and privileg'd destruction.

Ben. Yet I must tell you, friend, the great must use
Sometimes as necessary tools of tumult. [them]

Dor. I would use them
Like dogs in time of plague, out-laws of nature,
Fit to be shot and brain'd without a process,
To stop infection ; that's their proper death.

Ben. No more.
Behold the emperor coming to survey
The slaves, in order to perform his vow.

Enter Muley-Moluch the *Emperor*, with *Attendants*.

The Mufti, and Muley-Zeydan.

Emp. Our armours now may rust, our idle scymiters
Hang by our fides for ornament, not use ;
Children shall beat our atabals and drums,
And all the noisy trades of war no more
Shall wake the peaceful morn. ‘ The Xeriffs blood
‘ No longer in divided channels runs,
‘ The younger house took end in Mahomet ;
Nor shall Sebastian's formidable name
Be longer us'd to lull the crying babe.

Muf. For this victorious day, our mighty prophet
Expects your gratitude, the sacrifice
Of Christian slaves, devoted, if you won.

Emp. The purple present shall be richly paid :
That vow perform'd, fasting shall be abolish'd ;
None ever serv'd Heaven well with a starv'd face :
Preach abstinence no more. I tell thee, Mufti,
Good feasting is devout ; and thou, our head,
Hast a religious, ruddy countenance.

‘ We will have learned luxury ; our lean faith
‘ Gives scandal to the Christians : they feed high.

Then

‘ Then look for shoals of converts, when thou hast
 ‘ Reform’d us into feasting.’

Muf. Fasting is but the letter of the law ;
 Yet it shews well to preach it to the vulgar.
 Wine is against our law, that’s literal too ;
 But not deny’d to kings, and to their guides.
 Wine is a holy liquor for the great.

Dor. [Aside.] This Mufti, in my conscience, is some English renegado, he talks so favourily of toping.

Emp. Bring forth th’ unhappy relicks of the war.
 Enter Mustapha, Captain of the rabble, with his followers of the black-guard, &c. and other Moors ; with them a company of Portuguese slaves, without any of the chief persons.

These are not fit to pay an emperor’s vow ;
 Our bulls and rams had been more noble victims ;
 These are but garbage, not a sacrifice.

Muf. The prophet must not pick and chuse his offerings ;
 Now he has given the day, ‘tis past recalling ;
 And he must be content with such as these.

Emp. But are these all ? Speak you that are their masters.

Muft. All, upon mine honour. If you’ll take them as their fathers got them, so ; if not, you must stay till they get a better generation. These Christians are mere bunglers ; they procreate nothing but out of their own wives, and these have all the looks of eldest sons.

Emp. Pain of your lives, let none conceal a slave.

Muft. Let every man look to his own conscience ; I am sure mine shall never hang me.

Ben. Thou speak’st as if thou wert privy to concealments. Then thou art an accomplice.

Muft. Nay, if accomplices must suffer, it may go hard with me. But here’s the devil on’t, there’s a great man and a holy man too concerned with me. Now, if I confess, he’ll be sure to escape between his greatness and his holiness, and I shall be murdered because of my poverty and rascality.

Muf. [Winking at him.] Then if thy silence save the great and holy,

‘ Tis sure thou shalt go straight to Paradise.

Muft. ‘ Tis a fine place, they say ; but, Doctor, I am not worthy on’t : I am contented with this homely world ;

'tis good enough for such a poor rascally Mussulman as I am. Besides, I have learnt so much good manners, Doctor, as to let my betters be serv'd before me.

Emp. Thou talkest as if the Mufti were concerned.

Muf. Your majesty may lay your soul on't. But for my part, though I am a plain fellow, yet I scorn to be tricked into Paradise, I would he should know it. The truth on't is, an't like you, his reverence bought of me the flower of all the market—These—these are but dogs-meat to them: and a round price he paid me too, I'll say that for him; but not enough for me to venture my neck for. 'If I get Paradise when my time comes, I can't help myself; but I'll venture nothing beforehand, upon a blind bargain.'

Emp. Where are those slaves? Produce them.

Muf. They are not what he says.

Emp. No more excuses. [One goes out to fetch them.] Know, thou mayst better dally With a dead prophet, than a living king.

Muf. I but reserv'd them to present thy greatness, An offering worthy thee.

Muf. By the same token there was a dainty virgin, (virgin, said I?) But I won't be too positive of that neither) with a roguish leering eye: he paid me down upon the nail a thousand golden sultanins, or he had never had her, I can tell him that. Now, is it very likely he would pay so dear for such a delicious morsel, and give it away out of his own mouth, when it had such a farewell with it too?

Enter Sebastian, conducted in mean habit, with Alvarez, Antonio, and Almeyda, her face veiled with a bairnus.

Emp. Ay, these look like the workmanship of Heaven; This is the porcelain clay of human kind, And therefore cast into these noble molds.

Dor. [Aside, while the Emperor whispers Benducar.] By all my wrongs, 'Tis he! ' Damnation seize me, but 'tis he!' My heart heaves up and swells; he's poison to me; My injur'd honour, and my ravish'd love, Bleed at their murd'rer's sight.

Ben. [To Dor. aside.] The Emperor would learn these You know them. [pris'ners names;]

Dor.

Dor. Tell him, no;
 And trouble me no more — I will not know them.
 ' Shall I trust Heav'n, that Heav'n which I renounc'd,
 ' With my revenge? Then, where's my satisfaction?
 ' No, it must be my own; I scorn a proxy. [Aside.]

Emp. 'Tis decreed,
 These of a better aspect, with the rest
 Shall share one common doom, and lots decide it.
 For every number'd captive put a ball
 Into an urn, three only black be there,
 The rest, all white, are safe.

Muf. Hold, Sir, the woman must not draw.

Emp. Oh, Musti,
 We know your reason! let her share the danger.

Muf. Our law says plainly women have no souls.

Emp. 'Tis true; their souls are mortal: set her by:
 Yet were Almeyda here, tho' Fame reports her
 The fairest of her sex, so much, unseen,
 I hate the sister of our rival house,
 Ten thousand such dry notions of our Alcoran
 Should not protect her life, if not immortal.
 ' Die as she could, all of a piece, the better,
 ' That none of her remain.'

Here an urn is brought in; the prisoners approach with great
 concernment, and amongst the rest Sebastian, Alvarez, and
 Antonio, who come more cheerfully.

Dor. Poor abject creatures, how they fear to die! [Aside.]
 These never knew one happy hour in life;
 Yet shake to lay it down. Is load so pleasant?
 ' Or has Heav'n hid the happiness of death,
 ' That men may dare to live?' — Now for our heroes.

[The three approach.]

Oh, these come up with spirits more resolv'd!
 Old, venerable Alvarez; well I know him;
 The fav'rite once of this Sebastian's father;
 Now minister — (too honest for his trade.)
 Religion bears him out, a thing taught young,
 In age ill practis'd, yet his prop in death.
 Oh, he has drawn a black, and smiles upon't,
 As who should say, my faith and soul are white,
 Tho' my lot swarthy! Now, if there be hereafter,
 He's bless'd; if not, well cheated, and dies pleas'd.

Anton.

Anton. [Holding his lot in his clenched hand.] Here I have
Be what thou wilt. I will not look too soon. thee,
Thou hast a colour; if thou prov'st not right,
I have a minute good ere I behold thee.
Now let me rowl and grubble thee.
Blind men say white feels smooth, and black feels rough:
Thou hast a rugged skin; I do not like thee.

Dor. There's the amorous, airy spark, Antonio;
The wittiest woman's toy in Portugal.
Lord what a loss of treats and serenades!
The whole she nation will be in mourning for him.

Anton. I have a moist, sweaty palm; the more's my sin.
If it be black, yet only dy'd, not odious
Damn'd natural ebony, there's hopes, in rubbing,
To wash this Ethiop white. [Looks.] Pox of the proverb!
As black as hell—another lucky saying!
‘ I think the devil's in me—good again!
‘ I cannot speak one syllable, but tends
‘ To death, or to damnation.’ [Holds up his ball.]

Dor. He looks uneasy at his future journey; [Aside.]
And wishies his boots off again, for fear
Of a bad road, and a worse inn at night.
Go to bed, fool, and take secure repose;
For thou shalt wake no more. [Sebastian comes up to draw.]
Emp. [To Ben.] Mark him who now approaches to the
He looks secure of death; superior greatness, [lott'ry;
Like Jové when he made Fate, and said, Thou art
The slave of my creation—I admire him.

Ben. He looks as man was made, with face erect,
That scorns his brittle corpse, and seems ashamed
He's not all spirit; his eyes, with a dumb pride,
Accusing Fortune, that he fell not warm;
Yet now disdains to live. [Sebast. draws a black.]

Emp. He has his wish;
And I have fail'd of mine.

Dor. Robb'd of my vengeance by a trivial chance! [Aside.]
Fine work above, ‘ that their anointed care
‘ Should die such little death! Or did his genius
‘ Know mine the stronger dæmon, fear'd the grapple,
‘ And looking round him, found this nook of fate
‘ To skulk behind my sword? Shall I discover him?
‘ Still he would not die mine; no thanks to my

‘ Revenge:

‘ Revenge : reserv’d but to more royal shambles.
 ‘ ’Twere base, too, and below those vulgar souls.
 ‘ That shar’d his danger, yet not one disclos’d him ;
 ‘ But, struck with reverence, kept an awful silence.’
 I’ll see no more of this—Dog of a prophet ! [Exit Dor.
 Emp. One of these three is a whole hecatomb ;
 And therefore only one of them shall die.
 ‘ The rest are but mute cattle ; and when Death
 ‘ Comes like a rushing lion, couch like spaniels,
 ‘ With lolling tongues, and tremble at the paw.’
 Let lots again decide it.

[The three draw again, and the lot falls on Sebastian.

Sebast. Then there’s no more to manage. If I fall,
 It shall be like myself : a setting sun
 Should leave a track of glory in the sky.
 Behold Sebastian, King of Portugal.

Emp. Sebastian ! Ha ! it must be he ; no other
 Could represent such suffering majesty.
 I saw him, as he terms himself, a sun
 Struggling in dark eclipse, and shooting day.
 On either side of the black orb that veil’d him.

Sebast. Not less, ev’n in this despicable now,
 Than when my name fill’d Afric with affrights,
 And froze your hearts beneath your torrid zone.

Ben. [To the Emp.] Extravagantly brave ! even to an
 Of greatness. [impudence

Sebast. Here satiate all your fury ;
 Let Fortune empty her whole quiver on me ;
 I have a soul, that, like an ample shield,
 Can take in all, and verge enough for more.
 ‘ I would have conquer’d you ; and ventur’d only
 ‘ A narrow neck of land for a third world,
 ‘ To give my subjects room to play.
 ‘ Fate was not mine,
 ‘ Nor am I Fate’s. Now I have pleas’d my longing,
 ‘ And trod the ground which I beheld from far.
 ‘ I beg no pity for this mould’ring clay ;
 ‘ For if you give it burial, there it takes
 ‘ Possession of your earth ;
 ‘ If burnt and scatter’d in the air, the winds
 ‘ That strow my dust, diffuse my royalty,

And spread me o'er your clime ; for where one atom
Of mine shall light, know, there Sebastian reigns.'

Emp. What shall I do to conquer thee ?

Sebast. Impossible —

Souls know no conquerors.

Emp. I'll shew thee for a monkey thro' my Afric.

Sebast. No, thou canst only shew me for a man.
Afric is stor'd with monsters ; man's a prodigy
Thy subjects have not seen.

Emp. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.

Seb. Thou mistak'st ;
For then I would not talk.

Ben. Sure he would sleep.

Seb. Till doomsday, when the trumpet sounds to rise ;
For that's a soldier's call.

Emp. Thour't brave too late ;
Thou shouldest have dy'd in battle like a soldier.

Seb. I fought and fell like one ; but death deceiv'd me :
I wanted weight of feeble Moors upon me,
To crush my soul out.

Emp. Still untameable !
In what a ruin has thy headstrong pride,
And boundless thirst of empire, plung'd thy people !

Seb. What say'st thou ? Ha ! No more of that.

Emp. Behold,
What carcases of thine thy crimes have strew'd,
And left our Afric vultures to devour.

Ben. Those souls were those thy god intrusted with
To cherish, not destroy. [thee,

Seb. Witness, Oh, Heaven, how much
This fight concerns me ! Would I had a soul
For each of these ; how gladly would I pay
The ransom down ! But since I have but one,
'Tis a king's life, and freely 'tis bestow'd.
Not your false prophet, but eternal justice,
Has deuin'd me the lot to die for these.

'Tis fit a sovereign so should pay such subjects ;
For subjects, such as they, are seldom seen,
Who not forsook me at my greatest need,
' Nor for base lucre sold their loyalty,
' But shar'd my dangers to the last event,

‘ And fenc’d them with their own :’ these thanks I pay
you: [Wipes his eyes.]

And know, that when Sebastian weeps, his tears
Come harder than his blood.

Emp. They plead too strongly
To be withstood: my clouds are gathering too,
In kindly inixture with his royal show’r:
Be safe and owe thy life, not to my gift,
But to the greatness of thy mind, Sebastian :
Thy subjects too shall live; a due reward
For their untainted faith, in thy concealment.

Muf. Remember, Sir, your vow. [A general shout.]

Emp. Do thou remember.

Thy function, Mercy, and provoke not blood.

‘ *M. Zeyd.* One of his generous fits, too strong to last.
[Aside to Benducar.]

‘ *Ben.* The Mufti reddens, mark that holy cheek.

[To him.]

‘ He frets within, froths treason at his mouth,
‘ And churns it through his teeth; leave me to work him.’
Seb. A mercy unexpected, undefir’d,
Surprises more: you’ve learn’d the art to vanquish:
You could not (give me leave to tell you, Sir)
Have giv’n me life but in my subjects safety:
Kings, who are fathers, live but in their people.

Emp. Still great, and grateful, that’s thy character.
Unveil the woman; I would view the face
That warm’d our Mufti’s zeal:
These pious parrots peck the fairest fruit:
Such tasters are for kings.

[Officers go to Almeyda to unveil her.]

Alm. Stand off, ye slaves, I will not be unveil’d.

Emp. Slave is thy title; force her.

Seb. On your lives approach her not.

Emp. How’s this?

Seb. Sir, pardon me,

And hear me speak.

Alm. Hear me; I will be heard:
I am no slave; the noblest blood of Afric
Runs in my veins; a purer stream than thine;
For, though deriv’d from the same source, thy current
Is puddled and defil’d with tyranny.

• *Emp.* What female fury have we here ?

• *Alm.* I should be one,

• Because of kin to thee : ' Wouldst thou be touch'd
By the presuming hands of saucy grooms ?
The same respect, nay, more, is due to me :
More for my sex ; the same for my descent.
These hands are only fit to draw the curtain.
Now, if thou dar'st, behold Almeyda's face.

[Unveils herself.]

• *Ben.* Would I had never seen it !

[Aside.]

Alm. She whom thy Mufti tax'd to have no soul ;
Let Afric now be judge ;
Perhaps thou think'st I meanly hope to 'scape,
As did Sebastian when he own'd his greatness.
But to remove that scruple, know, base man,
My murder'd father, and my brother's ghost
Still haunt this breast, and prompt it to revenge.
Think not I could forgive, nor dare thou pardon.

• *Emp.* Wouldst thou revenge thee, trait'ress, hadst
thou power ?

• *Alm.* Traitor, I would ! the name's more justly thine :

• Thy father was not more than mine the heir
• Of this large empire ; but with arms united
• They fought their way, and seiz'd the crown by force :
• And equal as their danger was their share :
• For where was eldership, where none had right
• But that which conquest gave ? ' Twas thy ambition
• Pull'd from my peaceful father what his sword
• Help'd thine to gain : surpriz'd him and his kingdom,
• No provocation given, no war declar'd.

• *Emp.* I'll hear no more.

• *Alm.* This is the living coal, that burning in me,

• Would flame to vengeance, could it find a vent :

• My brother too, that lies yet scarcely cold

• In his deep wat'ry bed : my wand'ring mother,

• Who in exile died.

• Oh, that I had the fruitful heads of Hydra,

• That one might bourgeon where another fell !

• Still would I give thee work ; still, still, thou tyrant,

• And hiss thee with the last.

• *Emp.* Somewhat, I know not what, comes over me :

Whether the toils of battle, unrepair'd

With due repose, or other sudden qualm.

Benducar, do the rest. [Goes off, the court follows him.

Bcn. Strange ! in full health ! This pang is of the soul :
The body's unconcern'd : I'll think hereafter.

Conduct these royal captives to the castle ;
Bid Dorax use them well, till further order.

[Going off, stops.

The inferior captives their first owners take,

To sell, or to dispose---You, Mustapha,

Set ope the market for the sale of slaves. [Exit Bend.

[The masters and slaves come forward, and buyers of several qualities come in and chaffer about the several owners, who make their slaves do tricks.

Must. My chattels are come into my hands again, and my conscience will serve me to sell them twice over ; any price now, before the Musti comes to claim them.

1st Mer. [To Must,] What dost hold that old fellow at ? [Pointing to Alvarez.] He's tough, and has no service in his limbs.

Must. I confess he's somewhat tough ; but, I suppose, you would not boil him. I ask for him a thousand crowns.

1st Mer. Thou meanest a thousand maravedi's.

Must. Pr'ythee, friend, give me leave to know my own meaning.

1st Mer. What virtues has he to deserve that price ?

Must. Marry come up, Sir ! Virtues quoth-a ! I took him in the king's company ; he's of a great family, and rich ; what other virtues wouldest thou have in a nobleman ?

1st Mer. I buy him with another man's purse, that's my comfort. My Lord Dorax, the governor, will have him at any rate :—There's handsel. Come, old fellow, to the castle.

Alv. To what is miserable age reserv'd !
But, Oh, the king ! and, Oh, the fatal secret !
Which I have kept thus long to time it better,
And now I would disclose, 'tis past my power.

[Exit with his master.

Must. Something of a secret, and of the king I heard him mutter : a pimp I'll warrant him, for I am sure he is

is an old courtier. Now to put off t'other remnant of my merchandize.--- 'Stir up, sirrah. [To Antonio.]

‘ *Ant.* Dog, what wouldst thou have?

‘ *Must.* Learn better manners, or I shall serve you a dog-trick; come down upon all four immediately; I'll make you know your rider.

‘ *Ant.* Thou wilt not make a horse of me?

‘ *Must.* Horse or ass, that's as thy mother made thee; ---but take earnest in the first place for thy sauciness. [Lashes him with his whip.] Be advised, friend, and buckle to thy geers: behold my ensign of royalty displayed over thee.

‘ *Ant.* I hope one day to use thee worse in Portugal.

‘ *Must.* Ay, and good reason, friend: if thou catchest me conquering on thy side of the water, lay me on lustily, I'll take it as kindly as thou dost this.

‘ [Holds up his whip.]

‘ *Ant.* [Lying down.] Hold, my dear thrum-cap: I obey thee cheerfully. I see the doctrine of non-resistance is never practised thoroughly, but when a man can't help himself.

‘ Enter a second Merchant:

‘ *2d Mer.* You, friend, I would see that fellow do his postures.

‘ *Must.* [Bridling *Ant.*] Now, sirrah, follow, for you have rode enough: to your paces, villain, amble, trot, and gallop:—Quick about there.—Yeap, the more money's bidden for you, the more your credit.

‘ [Antonio follows at the end of the bridle on his hands;

‘ and feet, and does all his postures.]

‘ *2d Mer.* He's well chined, and has a tolerable good back; that's half in half. [To *Mustapha*.] I would see him strip, has he no diseases about him?

‘ *Must.* He's the best piece of man's flesh in the market, not an eye-sore in his whole body. Feel his legs, master, neither splint, spaven, nor wind-gall.

‘ [Claps him on the shoulder.]

‘ *Mer.* [Feeling about him, and then putting his hand on his side.] Out upon him, how his flank heaves! The whorlson's broken-winded.

‘ *Must.* Thick-breathed a little; nothing but a sorry cold with lying out a nights in trenches; but found

‘ wind and limb, I warrant him. Try him at a loose
‘ trot a little. [Puts the bridle into his hand, he strokes him.
‘ Ant. For heaven’s sake, owner, spare me : you know
‘ I am but new broken.’

2d Mer. ‘ ‘Tis but a washy jade, I see.’ What do you
ask for this bauble ?

Must. Bauble do you call him ? he’s a substantial true-
bred beast ; bravely forehanded : mark but the cleanness
of his shapes too : his dam may be a Spanish gennet, but
a true barb by the fire, or I have no skill in horse-flesh—
Marry, I ask six hundred xerifs for him.

Enter Mufti.

Muf. What’s that you are asking, firrah ?

Must. Marry I ask your reverence six hundred par-
dons ; I was doing you a small piece of service here,
putting off your cattle for you.

Muf. And putting the money into your own pocket ?

Must. Upon vulgar reputation, no my Lord, it was
for your profit and emolument. ‘ What, wrong the head
‘ of my religion ? I was sensible you would have damned
‘ me, or any man that should have injured you in a single
‘ farthing ; for I knew that was sacrifice.

‘ Muf. Sacrilege you mean, firrah,—and damning
‘ shall be the least part of your punishment : I have taken
‘ you in the manner, and will have the law upon you.

‘ Must. Good my Lord, take pity upon a poor man in
‘ this world, and damn me in the next.

‘ Muf. No, firrah, so you may repent, and scape
‘ punishment : Did not you sell this very slave amongst
‘ the rest to me, and take money for him ?

‘ Must. Right, my Lord..

‘ Muf. And selling him again, take money twice for
‘ the same commodity ? Oh, villain ! But did you not
‘ know him to be my slave, firrah ?

‘ Must. Why should I lie to your honour ? I did know
‘ him ; and thereupon seeing him wander about, took
‘ him up for a stray, and impounded him, with intention
‘ to restore him to the right owner.

‘ Muf. And yet at the same time was selling him to
‘ another : how rarely the story hangs together !

‘ Must. Patience, my Lord. I took him up, as your
‘ herriot, with intention to have made the best of him,
‘ and

‘ and then have brought the whole product of him in a
‘ purse to you ; for I know you would have spent half
‘ of it upon your pious pleasures,’ have hoarded up the
other half, and given the remainder in charities to the
poor.

Muf. And what’s become of my other slave? Thou
hast sold him too, I have a villainous suspicion.

Must. I know you have, my Lord ; but while I was
managing this young robustious fellow, that old spark,
who was nothing but skin and bone, and by consequence
very nimble, slipt through my fingers like an eel, for
there was no hold-fast of him, and ran away to buy him-
self a new master.

Muf. [To Ant.] Follow me home, firrah. [To Must.]
I shall remember you some other time.

[*Exeunt Muf. with Ant.*]

Must. I never doubted your Lordship’s memory, for an
ill turn : and I shall remember him too in the next rising
of the mobile, for this act of resumption ; ‘ and more es-
‘ pecially for the ghostly counsel he gave me before the
‘ emperor, to have hanged myself in silence, to have
‘ saved his reverence.’ The best on’t is, I am before-
hand with him, for selling one of his slaves twice over.
— And if he had not come just in the nick, I might
have pocketted up t’other : for what should a poor man
do that gets his living by hard labour, but pray for bad
times when he may get it easily? Oh, for some incom-
parable tumult! Then should I naturally wish that the
beaten party might prevail ; because we have plundered
t’other side already, and there’s nothing more to get of
them.

Both rich and poor for their own interest pray,

‘Tis ours to make our fortune while we may ;

For kingdoms are not conquer’d every day. [Ex.]

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, *supposed to be a terrace walk, on the side of the castle of Alcazar.*

Enter Emperor and Benducar.

EMPEROR.

AND think'st thou not it was discover'd?

Ben. No:

‘ The thoughts of kings are like religious groves,

‘ The walks of muffled gods: sacred retreat,

‘ Where none but whom they please t'admit, approach.

‘ *Em.* Did not my conscious eyes flash out a flame

‘ To lighten those brown horrors, and disclose

‘ The secreat path I trod?

‘ *Ben.* I could not find it, 'till you lent a clue

‘ To that close labyrinth; how then should they?

Emp. I would be loth they should: it breeds contempt
For herds to listen, or presume to pry,
When the hurt lion groans within his den:
But is't not strange?

Ben. To love? not more than 'tis to live; a tax
Impos'd on all by Nature, paid in kind,
Familiar as our being.

Emp. Still 'tis strange

‘ To me: I know my soul as wild as wind;

‘ That sweeps the desarts of our moving plains;

‘ Love might as well be sow'd upon our fands,

‘ As in a breast so barren.’

To love an enemy, ‘ the only one

‘ Remaining too, whom yester sun beheld,

‘ Must'ring her charms, and rolling as the past

‘ By every squadron her alluring eyes;

‘ To edge her champions swords, and urge my ruin.

‘ The shouts of soldiers, and the burst of cannon,

‘ Maintain even still a deaf and murmur'ring noise;

‘ Nor is heav'n yet recover'd of the sound

‘ Her battle rous'd: yet spite of me, I love..

‘ *Ben.* What then controuls you?

‘ Her person is as prostrate as her party.

‘ *Emp.* A thousand things controul this conqueror:

‘ My

' My native pride to own th' unworthy passion,
 ' Hazard of interest, and my people's love.
 ' To what a storm of fate am I exposed !
 ' What if I had her murder'd ? 'tis but what
 ' My subjects all expect, and she deserves.
 ' Would not the impossibility
 ' Of ever, ever seeing, or possessing,
 ' Calm all this rage, this hurricane of soul ?
 ' *Ben.* That ever, ever,
 ' I mark'd the double, shows extreme reluctance
 ' To part with her for ever.
 ' *Emp.* Right, thou hast me.
 ' I would, but cannot kill, I must enjoy her :
 ' I must, and what I must, be sure I will.
 ' What's royalty, but power to please myself !
 ' And if I dare not, then am I the slave,
 ' And my own slaves the sovereigns,— 'tis resolv'd !
 ' Weak princes flatter when they want the power
 ' To curb their people: tender plants must bend :
 ' But when a government is grown to strength,
 ' Like some old oak, rough with its armed bark,
 ' It yields not to the tug, but only nods,
 ' And turns to sullen state.'

Ben. Then you resolve

T' implore her pity, and to beg relief ?

Emp. Death ! must I beg the pity of my slave ?
 Must a king beg ? Yes, love's a greater king ;
 ' A tyrant, nay, a devil that possesses me :
 He tunes the organs of my voice, and speaks
 Unknown to me within me ; pushes me,
 And drives me on by force, —
 Say I should wed her, would not my wise subjects
 Take check, and think it strange ? perhaps revolt ?

Ben. I hope they would not.

' *Emp.* Then thou doubt'st they would ?

Ben. To whom ?

Emp. To her

Perhaps, or to my brother, or to thee.

Ben. [In disorder.] To me ! Me did you mention ?

How I tremble !

The name of treason shakes my honest soul.

If I am doubted, Sir,
Secure yourself this moment, take my life.

Emp. No 'more : ' if I suspected thee—I would.

Ben. I thank your kindness: guilt had almost lost me. [Aside.]

Emp. But clear my doubts: think'it thou they may rebel?

Ben. 'This goes as I would wish—' [Aside.]

'Tis possible:

A secret party still remains, that lurks
Like embers rak'd in ashes—wanting but
A breath to blow aside th' involving dust,
And then they blaze abroad.

Emp. They must be trampled out.

Ben. But first be known.

Emp. Torture shall force it from them.

Ben. You would not put a nation to the rack?

Emp. Yes, the whole world; so I be safe, I care not.

Ben. Our limbs and lives

Are yours, but mixing friends with foes is hard.

Emp. All may be foes; or how to be distinguishi'd,
If some be friends?

Ben. They may with ease be winnow'd;
Suppose some one who has deserv'd your trust,
Some one who knows mankind, should be employ'd
To mix among 'em, seem a malecontent,
And dive into their breasts, to try how far
They dare oppose your love?

Emp. I like this well; 'tis wholesome wickedness.

Ben. Whomever he suspects, he fastens there,
And leaves no cranny of his soul unsearch'd:
‘ Then like a bee bagg'd with his honey'd venom,
‘ He brings it to your hive:’ if such a man
So able and so honest may be found;
If not, my project dies.

Emp. By all my hopes thou hast describ'd thyself:—
Thou, thou alone art fit to play that engine
Thou only couldst contrive.

Ben. Sure I could serve you;
I think I could:—but here's the difficulty,
I'm so intirely yours,

That

That I should scurvily dissemble hate ;
The cheat would be too gross.

Emp. Art thou a statesman,
And canst not be a hypocrite ? Impossible :
Do not distrust thy virtues.

Ben. If I must personate this seeming villain,
Remember 'tis to serve you.

Emp. No more words :
Love goads me to Almeyda, all affairs
Are troublesome but that ; and yet that most. [Going.
Bid Dorax treat Sebastian like a king ;
I had forgot him ; — but this love mars all,
‘ And takes up my whole breast.’ [Exit Emperor.

Ben. [To the *Emp.*] Be sure I'll tell him —
With all the aggravating circumstances
I can, to make him swell at that command.
‘ The tyrant first suspected me :
‘ Then with a sudden gust he whirl'd about,
‘ And trusted me too far : madness of pow'r !
‘ Now, by his own consent I ruin him.
‘ For, should some feeble soul, for fear or gain,
‘ Bolt out t'accuse me, ev'n the king is cozen'd,
‘ And thinks he's in the secret.
‘ How sweet is treason when the traitor's safe !’

Enter Mufti and Dorax, seeming to confer.
The Mufti, and with him my sullen Dorax :
The first is mine already.
’Twas easy work to gain a covetous mind,
Whom rage to lose his pris'ners had prepar'd :
Now, caught himself.

He would seduce another ; I must help him :
For churchmen, though they itch to govern all,
Are silly, woeful, awkward politicians :
‘ They make lame mischief, though they mean it well :
‘ Their int'rest is not finely drawn, and hid,
‘ But seams are coarsely bungled up, and seen.’

Muf. He'll tell you more.

Dor. I've heard enough already
To make me loath thy morals.

Ben. [To Dor.] You seem warm ;
The good man's zeal perhaps has gone too far.

Dor.

Dor. Not very far ; not farther than zeal goes
Of course ; a small day's journey short of treason.

Muf. By all that's holy, treason was not nam'd :
‘ I spar'd the emperor's broken vows, to save
‘ The slaves from death : tho' it was cheating heav'n,
‘ But I forgave him that.

‘ *Dor.* And slighted o'er [Scornfully.]
‘ The wrongs himself sustain'd in property :
‘ When his bought slaves were seiz'd by force, no loss
‘ Of his consider'd, and no cost repaid.

‘ *Muf.* Not wholly slighted o'er, not absolutely :
‘ Some modest hints of private wrongs I urg'd.
Dor. Two thirds of all he said : ‘ there he began
‘ To shew the fulness of his heart ; there ended :
‘ Some short excursions of a broken vow
‘ He made indeed, but flat insipid stuff :
‘ But when he made his loss the theme, he flourish'd,
‘ Reliev'd his fainting rhetoric with new figures,
‘ And thunder'd at oppressing tyranny.’

Muf. Why not, when sacrilegious pow'r would seize
My property ? 'tis an affront to heav'n,
Whose person, though unworthy, I sustain.

Dor. ‘ You've made such strong alliances above,
‘ That 'twere profaneness in us laity
‘ To offer earthly aid.’

I tell thee, Mufti, if the world were wise,
They would not wag one finger in your quarrels.
Your heav'n you promise, but our earth you covet :
The Phaetons of mankind, who fire that world,
Which you were sent by preaching but to warm.

Ben. This goes beyond the mark.

Muf. No, let him rail :
His prophet works within him ;
He's a rare convert.

Dor. ‘ Now his zeal yearns
‘ To see me burnt ; he damns me from his church,
‘ Because I would restrain him to his duty :’
Is not the care of souls a load sufficient ?
Are not your holy stipends paid for this ?
Were you not bred apart from worldly noise,
To study souls, their cures, and their diseases ?
If this be so, we ask you but our own :

Give us your whole employment, all your care :
 The province of the soul is large enough
 To fill up every cranny of your time,
 And leave you much to answer, if one wretch
 Be damn'd by your neglect.

Ben. [To the Mufti.] He speaks but reason.

‘ *Dor.* Why then these foreign thoughts of state-
 employments,

- Abhorrent to your function and your breeding ;
- Poor droaning truants of unpractis'd cells,
- Bred in the fellowship of bearded boys,
- What wonder is it if you know not men ?
- Yet there you live demure, with down-cast eyes,
- And humble as your discipline requires :
- But, when let loose from thence to live at large,
- Your little tincture of devotion dies ;
- Then luxury succeeds, and sets agog
- With a new scene of yet untasted joys,
- You fall with greedy hunger to the feast,
- Of all your college virtues, nothing now
- But your original ignorance remains ;
- Bloated with pride, ambition, avarice,
- You swell, to counsel kings, and govern kingdoms.

‘ *Muf.* He prates as if kings had not consciences,

‘ And none requir'd directors but the crowd.

- ‘ *Dor.* As private men they want you, not as kings ;
- Nor would you care t'inspect their public conscience,
- But that it draws dependencies of pow'r,
- And earthly interest, which you long to sway :
- Content you with monopolizing heav'n,
- And let this little hanging ball alone ;
- For give you but a foot of conscience there,
- And you, like Archimedes, toss the globe.
- We know your thoughts of us that laymen are,
- Lag souls, and rubbish of remaining clay,
- Which heav'n, grown weary of more perfect work,
- Set upright with a little puff of breath,
- And bid us pass for men.’

Muf. I will not answer,
 Base foul-mouth'd renegade ; but I'll pray for thee,
 To shew my charity.

[Exit Mufti.]

Dor. Do ; but forget not him who needs it most :

Allow thyself some share: 'he's gone too soon; I had to tell him of his holy jugglings; Things that would startle faith, and make us deem Not this, or that, but all religions false.'

Ben. Our holy orator has lost the cause: [Aside.] But I shall yet redeem it.—[To Dorax.] Let him go; For I have secret orders from the emperor, Which none but you must hear: I must confess, I could have wish'd some other hand had brought them. When did you see your pris'ner, great Sebastian!

Dor. You might as well have ask'd me, when I saw A crested dragon, or a basilisk; Both are less poison to my eyes and nature. He knows not I am I; nor shall he see me, Till time has perfected a lab'ring thought, That rowls within my breast.

Ben. 'Twas my mistake: I guess'd indeed that time, and his misfortunes, And your returning duty, had effac'd The mem'ry of past wrongs; they would in me, And I judg'd you as tame, and as forgiving.

Dor. Forgive him! No; I left my foolish faith, Because it would oblige me to forgiveness.

Ben. I can't but grieve to find you obstinate: For you must see him; 'tis our emp'ror's will, And strict command.

Dor. I laugh at that command.

Ben. You must do more than see; serve, and respect

Dor. See, serve him, and respect, and after all My yet uncancell'd wrongs, I must do this! But I forget myself.

Ben. Indeed you do.

Dor. The emp'ror is a stranger to my wrongs; I need but tell my story, to revoke This hard commission.

Ben. Can you call me friend, And think I could neglect to speak, at full, Th' affronts you had from your ungrateful master?

Dor. And yet enjoin'd my service and attendance?

Ben. And yet enjoin'd them both: would that were all; He skrew'd his face into a harden'd smile, And said Sebastian knew to govern slaves.

Dor.

Dor. Slaves are the growth of Afric, not of Europe :
 By Heav'n, I will not lay down my commission ;
 Not at his foot, I will not stoop so low :
 But if there be a part in all his face
 More sacred than the rest, I'll throw it there.

Ben. You may : but then you lose all future means
 Of vengeance on Sebastian, ' when no more
 ' Alcade of this fort.'

Dor. That thought escap'd me.

Ben. Keep your command, and be reveng'd on both :
 ' Nor sooth yourself ; you have no pow'r t'affront him ;
 ' The emp'ror's love protects him from insults.
 ' And he who spoke that proud, ill-natur'd word,
 ' Following the bent of his impetuous temper,
 ' May force your reconcilement to Sebastian :
 ' Nay, bid you kneel, and kiss the offending foot,
 ' That kick'd you from his presence ?
 But think not to divide their punishment ;
 You cannot touch a hair of loath'd Sebastian,
 While Muley-Moluch lives.

Dor. What means this riddle ?

Ben. 'Tis out : there no needs to *Œdipus* to solve it.
Our emp'ror is a tyrant, fear'd and hated ;
 I scarce remember in his reign, one day
 Pass guiltless o'er his execrable head.
 He thinks the sun is lost that sees no blood :
 When none is shed we count it holiday.
 We, who are most in favour, cannot call
 This hour our own :—you know the younger brother,
 Mild Muley-Zeydan ?—

Dor. Hold, and let me think.

Ben. The soldiers idolize you,
 He trusts you with the castle,
 The key of all his kingdom.

Dor. Well ; and he trusts you too.

Ben. Else I were mad,
 To hazard such a daring enterprize.

Dor. He trusts us both ; mark that, shall we betray
 ' A master, who reposes life and empire. [him :
 ' On our fidelity ? I grant he is a tyrant,
 ' That hated name my nature most abhors ;
 ' More, as you say, has loaded me with scorn,

‘ Ev’n with the last contempt, to serve Sebastian.
 ‘ Yet more I know he vacates my revenge :
 ‘ Which but by this revolt I cannot compass :
 ‘ But, while he trusts me, ’twere so base a part
 ‘ To fawn, and yet betray ; I should be his’d
 ‘ And whoop’d in hell for that ingratitude.’

Ben. Consider well what I have done for you.

Dor. Consider thou what thou would’st have me do.

Ben. You’ve too much honour for a renegade.

Dor. And thou too little faith to be a fav’rite!

‘ Is not the bread thou eat’st, the robe thou wear’st,
 ‘ Thy wealth and honours, all the pure indulgence
 ‘ Of him thou would’st destroy ?
 ‘ And would his creature, nay, his friend, betray him :
 ‘ Why then no bond is left on human kind :
 ‘ Distrusts, debates, immortal strifes ensue ;
 ‘ Children may murder parents, wives their husbands ;
 ‘ All must be rapine, wars and desolation,
 ‘ When trust and gratitude no longer bind.’

Ben. Well have you argued in your own defence ;

You, who have burst asunder all those bonds,

And turn’d a rebel to your native prince.

Dor. True, I rebell’d : but when did I betray ?

Indignities, which man could not support,

Provok’d my vengeance to this noble crime :

But he had stripp’d me first of my command,

Dismiss’d my service, and absolv’d my faith ;

And, with disdainful language, dar’d my worst.

I but accepted war, which he denounc’d.

Else had you seen, not Dorax, but Alonzo,

With his couch’d lance against your foremost Moors,

Perhaps too turn’d the fortuue of the day ;

Made Afric mourn, and Portugal triumph.

Ben. Let me embrace thee.

Dor. Stand off, sycophant,
 And keep infection distant.

Ben. Brave and honest.

Dor. In spite of thy temptations.

Ben. Call them trials :

There were no more : ‘ thy faith was held in balance,

‘ And nicely weigh’d by jealousy of pow’r ;

‘ Vast was the trust of such a royal charge,

‘ And

• And our wise emperor might justly fear
 • Sebastian might be freed and reconcil'd,
 • By new obligements, to thy former love.'
Dor. I doubt thee still ; thy reasons were too strong,
 And driven too near the head, to be but artifice :
 And after all, I know thou art a statesman,
 Where truth is rarely found.

Ben. Behold the emperor ;
 Ask him, I beg thee, to be justify'd,
 If he employ'd me not to ford thy soul,
 And try the footing whether false or firm.

Dor. Death to my eyes, I see Sebastian with him !
 Must he be serv'd ! Avoid him ; if we meet,
 It must be like the crush of heav'n and earth,
 T'involve us both in ruin.

[Exit.]

Ben. 'Twas a bare saving game I made with Dorax,
 But better so than lost : he cannot hurt me,
 That I precautioned ; I must ruin him.
 But now this love ; ay, there's the gath'ring storm !
 The tyrant must not wed Almeyda ; no ;
 That ruins all the fabric I am rais'ng.
 Yet seeming to approve it gave me time,
 And gaining time gains all.

[Benducar goes and waits behind the Emperor.]

Enter Emperor, Sebastian, and Almeyda, *advaneing to the front of the stage* ; guards and attendants.

Emp. [To Seb.] I bade them serve you, and if they obey not,

I keep my lions keen within their dens,
 To stop their maws with disobedient slaves.

Seb. If I had conquer'd,
 They could not have with more observance waited :
 • Their eyes, hands, feet,
 • Are all so quick, they seem t'have but one motion,
 • To catch my flying words.' Only the Alcade
 Shuns me, and with a grim civility
 Bows, and declines my walks.

Emp. A renegade !
 I know no more of him : but that he's brave,
 And hates your Christian sect. If you can fraine
 A farther wish, give wing to your desires,
 And name the thing you want.

Seb. My liberty;

For were ev'n Paradise itself my prison,
Still I should long to leap the crystal walls.

Emp. Sure our two souls have somewhere been acquaint-
In former beings: or struck out together, [ed
One spark to Afric flew, and one to Portugal.
Expect a quick deliverance: [Turning to Almey.] Here's
third,

Of kindred soul to both: pity our stars
Have made us foes! I should not wish her death.

Alm. I ask no pity; if I thought my soul
Of kin to thine, soon would I rend my heart-strings,
And tear out that alliance: but thou, viper,
Hast cancell'd kindred, made a rent in nature,
And through her holy bowels gnaw'd thy way,
Through thy own blood to empire.

Emp. This again:
And yet she lives, and only lives t'upbraid me.

Seb. What honour is there in a woman's death?
Wrong'd as she says, but helpless to revenge;
• Strong in her passion, impotent of reason,
Too weak to hurt, too fair to be destroy'd.
Mark her majestic fabrick; she's a temple
Sacred by birth, and built by hands divine;
Her soul's the deity that lodges there:
Nor is the pile unworthy of the god.

Emp. She's all that thou canst say, or I can think.
But the perverseness of her clam'rous tongue
Strikes pity deaf.

Seb. Then only hear her eyes;
Tho' they are mute, they plead; nay more, command;
For beauteous eyes have arbitrary power.

• All females have prerogative of sex,
• The shees even of the savage herd are safe:
• All, when they snarl or bite, have no return
• But courtship from the male.'

Emp. Were she not she, and I not Muley-Moluch,
She's mistress of inevitable charms,
For all but me; nor am I so exempt,
But that——I know not what I was to say——
But I am too obnoxious to my friends,
And sway'd by your advice.

Seb.

Seb. Sir, I advis'd not ;
By Heav'n, I never counsell'd love, but pity.

Emp. By Heav'n thou didst : deny it not, thou didst :
For what was all that prodigality
Of praise, but to enslave me ! — — —

Seb. Sir — — —

Emp. No more :
Thou hast convinc'd me, that she's worth my love.

Seb. Was ever man so ruin'd by himself ? [Aside.]

Alm. ' Thy love ! that odious mouth was never fram'd
' To speak a word so soft.'

Name death again, for that thou canst pronounce
With horrid grace, becomimg of a tyrant.

— Love is for human hearts, and not for thine,
Where the brute beast extinguishes the man.

Emp. Such if I were; yet rugged lions love,
And grapple, and compel their savage dames. — — —
Mark, my Sebastian, how that fullen frown, [She frowns.]
Like flashing lightning, opens angry heaven ;
And while it kills, delights. But yet, insult not
Too soon, proud beauty, I confess no love.

Seb. No, Sir, I said so, and I witness for you :
Not love, but noble pity mov'd your mind :
Int'rest might urge you too to save her life ;
For those who wish her party lost, might murmur
At shedding royal blood.

Emp. Right, thou instruct'st me :
Interest of state requires not death, but marriage,
T' unite the jarring titles of our line,

Seb. Let me dumb for ever, all I plead, [Aside.]
Like wildfire thrown against the winds, returns
With double force to burn me.

Emp. Could I but bend, to make my beauteous foe
The partner of my throne, and of my bed — — —

Alm. Still thou dissemblest ; but I read thy heart,
And know the power of my own charms ; thou lov'st,
And I am pleas'd, for my revenge, thou dost.

Emp. And thou hast cause.

Alm. I have, for I have power to make thee wretched.
Be sure I will, and yet despair of freedom.

Emp. Well then, I love, — — —
And 'tis below my greatness to disown it : — — —

Love

Love thee implacably, yet hate thee too :
 Would hunt thee bare-foot, in the mid-day sun,
 Through the parch'd desarts, and the scorching sands,
 T' enjoy thy love, and once enjoy'd, to kill thee.

Alm. 'Tis a false courage, when thou threatnest me ;
 Thou canst not stir a hand to touch my life :
 Do not I see thee tremble while thou speak'st ?
 Lay by thy lion's hide, vain conqueror,
 And take the distaff ; for thy soul's my slave.

Emp. Confusion ! How thou view'st my very heart !
 I could as soon
 Stop a spring tide, blown in, with my bare hand,
 As this impetuous love : — Yes, I will wed thee :
 In spite of thee, and of myself, I will.

Alm. For what ? to people Africa with monsters,
 Which that unnatural mixture must produce ?
 No, were we join'd, ev'n though it were in death,
 Our bodies burning in one funeral pile,
 The prodigy of Thebes would be renew'd,
 And my divided flame should break from thine.

Emp. Serpent, I will engender poison with thee ;
 Join hate with hate, add venom to the birth ;
 Our off-spring, like the seed of dragon teeth,
 Shall issue arm'd, and fight themselves to death.

Alm. I'm calm again, thou canst not marry me.
Emp. As gleams of sunshine soften storms to showers,
 So if you smile, the loudness of my rage
 In gentle whispers shall return, but this —
 That nothing can divert my love but death.

Alm. See how thou art deceiv'd, I am a Christian ;
 'Tis true, unpractis'd in my new belief,
 Wrongs I resent, nor pardon yet with ease ;
 Those fruits come late, and are of slow increase,
 In haughty hearts, like mine : now, tell thyself
 If this one word destroy not thy design ;
 Thy law permits thee not to marry me.

Emp. 'Tis but a specious tale, to blast my hopes,
 And baffle my pretensions. Speak, Sebastian,

And as a king, speak true.

Seb. Then, thus adjur'd

On a king's word 'tis truth, but truth ill-tim'd ;

For her dear life is now expos'd anew ;

Unless,

• Unless you wholly can put on divinity,
 • And graciously forgive.
 • *Alm.* Now learn by this,
 • The little value I have left for life,
 • And trouble me no more.'

Emp. I thank thee, woman ;
 Thou hast restor'd me to my native rage ;
 And I will seize my happiness by force.

Seb. Know, Muley-Moluch, when thou dar'st attempt —

Emp. Beware, I would not be provok'd to use
 A conqueror's right, and therefore charge thy silence,
 If thou would'st merit to be thought my friend,
 I leave thee to persuade her to compliance ;
 If not, there's a new gust in ravishment,
 Which I have ne'er yet try'd.

Ben. They must be watch'd ; [Aside.]
 • For something I observ'd creates a doubt.'

[Exit Emp. and Bend.

Seb. I've been too tame, have basely borne my wrongs,
 And not exerted all the king within me :
 I heard him, Oh, sweet heav'ns, he threat'ned rape ;
 Nay, insolently urg'd me to persuade thee,
 Ev'n thee, thou idol of my soul and eyes ;
 For whom I suffer life, and drag this being.

• *Alm.* You turn my prison to a Paradise ;
 • But I have turn'd your empire to a prison :
 • In all your wars good fortune flew before you ;
 • Sublime you sat in triumph on her wheel ;
 • Till in my fatal cause your sword was drawn,
 • The weight of my misfortunes dragg'd you down.

• *Seb.* And is't not strange, that heav'n should bless my
 • In common causes, and desert the best ? [arms]
 • Now in your greatest, last extremity,
 • When I would aid you most, and most desire it,
 • I bring but sighs, the succours of a slave.'

Alm. ' Leave then the luggage of your fate behind,
 • To make your flight more easy, leave Almeyda :
 • Nor think me left a base ignoble prey,
 • Expos'd to this inhuman tyrant's lust ;'
 My virtue is a guard beyond my strength,
 And death, my last defence, within my call.

• *Seb.* Death may be call'd in vain, and cannot come ; [Ty-

' Tyrants can tie him up from your relief :
 ' Nor has a Christian privilege to die.
 ' Alas, thou art too young in thy new faith ;
 ' Brutus and Cato might discharge their souls,
 ' And give them furlo's for another world :
 ' But we, like centries, are oblig'd to stand
 ' In starless nights, and wait th' appointed hour.
 ' *Alm.* If shunning ill be good
 ' To those who cannot shun it but by death,
 ' Divines but peep on undiscover'd worlds,
 ' And draw the distant landscape as they please :
 ' But who has e'er return'd from those bright regions,
 ' To tell their manners, and relate their laws ?
 ' I'll venture landing on that happy shore
 ' With an unsully'd body and white mind ;
 ' If I have err'd, some kind inhabitant
 ' Will pity a stray'd soul, and take me home.'

Seb. Beware of death, thou canst not die unperjur'd,
 And leave an unaccomplish'd love behind.

Thy vows are mine ; nor will I quit my claim :
 The tie of minds are but imperfect bonds,
 Unless the bodies join to seal the contract.

Alm. What joys can you possess, or can I give,
 Where groans of death succeed the sighs of love ?
 Our Hymen has not on his saffron robe ;
 But muffled up in mourning, downward holds
 His drooping torch, extinguish'd with his tears.

Seb. The God of Love stands ready to revive it
 With his æthereal breath.

' *Alm.* 'Tis late to join, when we must part so soon.
 ' *Seb.* Nay, rather let us haste it, ere we part :
 ' Our souls for want of that acquaintance here,
 ' May wander in the starry walks above,
 ' And, forc'd on worse companions, miss ourselves.
 ' *Alm.* The tyrant will not long be absent hence ;
 ' And soon I shall be ravish'd from your arms.
 ' *Seb.* Wilt thou thyself become the greater tyrant,
 ' And give not love, while thou hast love to give ?
 ' In dangerous days, when riches are a crime,
 ' The wise betimes make over their estates ;
 ' Make o'er thy honour, by a deed of trust,
 ' And give me seizure of the mighty wealth.'

Alm.

Alm. What shall I do? Oh, teach me to refuse!

• I would, and yet I tremble at the grant:

• For dire presages fright my soul by day,

• And boding visions haunt my nightly dreams;

• Sometimes, methinks, I hear the groans of ghosts,

• Thin, hollow sounds, and lamentable screams;

• Then, like a dying echo, from afar,

• My mother's voice, that cries, Wed not, Almeyda!

• Forewarn'd Almeyda, marriage is thy crime!

• *Seb.* Some envious dæmon, to delude our joys—

• Love is not sin, but where 'tis sinful love.

• *Alm.* Mine is a flame so holy and so clear,

• That the white taper leaves no soot behind,

• No smoke of lust: but chaste as sister's love,

• When coldly they return a brother's kiss,

• Without the zeal that meets at lovers mouths.

• *Seb.* Laugh, then, at fond presages; I had some:

• Fam'd Nostrodamus, when he took my horoscope,

• Foretold my father, I should wed with incest,

• Ere this unhappy war my mother dy'd,

• And sisters I had none: vain augury!

• A long religious life, a holy age,

• My stars assign'd me too—impossible;

• For how can incest suit with holiness,

• Or priestly orders with a princely state?

Alm. Old venerable Alvarez!—[Sighing.]

Seb. But why that sigh in naming that good man?

• *Alm.* Your father's counsellor and confidant—

• *Seb.* He was; and, if he lives, my second father.

Alm. Mark'd our farewell, when, going to the fight,

You gave Almeyda for the word of battle:

• Twas in that fatal moment he discover'd

The love that long we labour'd to conceal.

• I know it; tho' my eyes stood full of tears,

• Yet thro' the mist I saw him stedfast gaze;

Then knock'd his aged breast, and inward groan'd,

Like some sad prophet, that foresaw the doom

Of those whom best he lov'd, and could not save.

Seb. It startles me, and brings to my remembrance,

That, when the shock of battle was begun,

• He would have much complain'd (but had not time)

• Of our hid passion; then, with lifted hands,

He

He begg'd me, by my father's sacred soul,
Not to espouse you, if he dy'd in fight:
For, if he liv'd, and we were conquerors,
He had such things to urge against our marriage,
As, now declar'd, would blunt my sword in battle,
And daftardize my courage.

‘ *Alm.* My blood curdles,
And takes about my heart.

‘ *Seb.* I'll breathe a sigh so warm into thy bosom,
Shall make it flow again. My love, he knows not
Thou art a Christian: that produc'd his fear,
Lest thou should sooth my soul with charms so strong,
That Heav'n might prove too weak.’

Alm. There must be more;
This could not blunt your sword.

Seb. Yes, if I drew it with a curs'd intent
To take a misbeliever to my bed:
It must be so.

Alm. Yet—

Seb. No, thou shalt not plead,
With that fair mouth, against the cause of love.
Within this castle is a captive priest,
My holy confessor, whose free access
Not ev'n the barb'rous victors have refus'd:
This happy hout his hands shall make us one.

Alm. I go, with Love and Fortune, two blind guides,
To lead my way, half loth, and half consenting.
If, as my soul forebodes, some dire event
Pursue this union, or some crime unknown,
Forgive me, Heav'n; and all ye bleſſ'd above,
Excuse the frailty of unbounded love.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *supposed a Garden, with Lodging Rooms behind it, or on the Side.*

Enter Muſti, Antonio as a Slave, and Johayma, the Muſti's wife.

Muf. And how do you like him? Look upon him well; he's a personable fellow, of a Christian dog. Now I think you are fitted for a gardener. Ha, what say'ſt thou, Johayma?

Job. He may make a shift to sow lettice, raise melons, and water a garden-plat; but otherwise, a very filthy fellow.

fellow. How odiously he smells of his country garlick!—Fugh, how he stinks of Spain!

Muf. Why, honey-bird, I bought him on purpose for thee. Didst thou not say thou long'dst for a Christian slave?

Job. Ay, but 'the sight of that loathsome creature has almost cured me; and' how can I tell that he's a Christian? 'An he were well searched, he may prove a Jew,' 'for ought I know.' And besides, I have always longed for an eunuch; for they say that's a civil creature, and almost as harmless as yourself, husband. Speak, fellow, are not you such a kind of peaceable thing?

Ant. I never was taken for one in my own country; and not very peaceable neither, when I am well provoked.

Muf. To your occupation, dog; bind up the jessamines in yonder arbour, and handle your pruning-knife with dexterity; tightly, I say, go tightly to your business. You have cost me much, and must earn it in your work: here's plentiful provision for you, rascal, sailing in the garden, and water in the tanck, and, on holydays, the licking of a platter of rice, when you deserve it.

Job. What have you been bred up to, sirrah? And what can you perform, to recommend you to my service?

Ant. [Making legs.] Why, Madam, I can perform as much as any man, in a fair lady's service. I can play upon the flute, and sing; I can carry an umbrella, and fan your ladyship, and cool you when you are too hot; in fine, no service, either by day or by night, shall come amiss to me; and besides, am of so quick an apprehension, that you need but wink upon me at any time, to make me understand my duty. [She winks at him.] 'Very fine; she has tipt the wink already. [Aside.]

Job. The whelp may come to something in time, when I have entered him into his business.

Muf. A very malapert cur, I can tell him that; I do not like his fawning. You must be taught your distance, sirrah. [Strikes him.]

Job. Hold, hold—He has deserved it, I confess; but, for once, let his ignorance plead his pardon; we must not discourage a beginner. Your reverence has taught

‘ us charity, even to birds and beasts. Here, you filthy brute you, take this little alms to buy you plaisters.

[*Gives him a piece of money.*]

‘ *Ant.* Money, and a love-pinch in the inside of my palm into the bargain !

[*Aside.*]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Benducar is coming to wait on you, and is already at the palace-gate.

Muf. Come in, Johayma; regulate the rest of my wives and concubines, and leave this fellow to his work.

‘ *Job.* How stupidly he stares about him, like a calf new come into the world ! I shall teach you, sirrah, to know your business a little better—This way, you awkward rascal ; here lies the arbour : must I be shewing you eternally ?

[*Turning him about.*]

‘ *Muf.* Come away, minion ; you shall shew him nothing.

‘ *Job.* I'll bring him into the arbour, where a rose-tree and a myrtle-tree are just falling, for want of a prop : if they were bound together, they would help to keep up one another. He's a raw gardener ; and 'tis but charity to teach him.

‘ *Muf.* No more deeds of charity to-day. Come in, or I shall think you a little better disposed than I could wish you.

‘ *Job.* Well, go before ; I will follow my pastor.

‘ *Muf.* So, you may cast a sheep's eye behind you. In before me.’ And you, sauciness, mind your pruning-knife ; or I may chance to use it for you.

[*Exeunt Mufti and Johayma.*]

‘ *Ant.* I thank you for that ; but I am in no such haste to be made a Mussulman. For his wedlock, for all her haughtiness, I find her coming. How far a Christian should resist, I partly know ; but how far a lewd young Christian can resist, is another question. ‘ She's tolerable, and I am a poor stranger, far from better friends, and in a bodily necessity.’ Now have I a strange temptation to try what other females are belonging to this family—I am not far from the women's apartment, I am sure ; and if these birds are within distance, here's that will chuckle them together. [*Pulls out his flute.*] ‘ If there be variety of Moor's flesh in this holy market, 'twere

‘ madness

‘ madness to lay out all my money upon the first bargain. [He plays. *A grate opens, and Morayma, the Mufti’s daughter, appears at it.*] — Ay, there’s an apparition ! This is a morsel worthy of a Musti ; ‘ this is a relishing bit in secret ; this is the mystery of his Alcoran, that must be reserved from the knowledge of the profane. ‘ vulgar ;’ this is the holiday devotion. See, she beckons too.’ [She beckons to him.]

Mor. Come a little nearer, and speak softly.

Ant. I come, I come ; I warrant thee, the least twinkle had brought me to thee : such another kind syllable or two, would turn me to a meteor, and draw me up to thee.

Mor. I dare not speak, for fear of being overheard ; but if you think my person worth your hazard, and can deserve my love — the rest this note shall tell you — ‘ [Throws down a handkerchief.]’ No more ; my heart goes with you. [Exit from the grate.]

Ant. ‘ Oh, thou pretty little heart ! art thou flown hither ? I’ll keep it warin, I warrant it, and brood upon it in the new nest. But now upon my treasure trove, that’s wrapped up in the handkerchief — No peeping here ; tho’ I long to be spelling her Arabic scrawls and pot-hooks — But I must carry off my prize, as robbers do, and not think of sharing the booty, before I am free from danger, and out of eye-shot from the other windows.’ If her wit be as poignant as her eyes, I am a double slave. Our northern beauties are mere dough to these ; insipid white earth, mere tobacco-pipe clay ; with no more soul and motion in them, than a fly in winter.

Here the warm planet ripens and sublimes

The well-bak’d beauties of the southern climes :

Our Cupid’s but a bungler in his trade ;

His keenest arrows are in Afric made.

END of the SECOND ACT.

[Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE, a Terrace-walk, or some other publick Place in
the Castle of Alcazar.

Enter the Emperor, and Benducar.

EMPEROR.

MARRY'D ! I'll not believe it ; 'tis imposture ;
Improbable they should presume 't attempt :
Impossible they should effect their wish.
Ben. Have patience, till I clear it.
Emp. I have none :
Go bid our moving plains of sand lie still,
And stir not, when the stormy south blows high.
From top to bottom thou hast toss'd my soul ;
And now 'tis in the madness of the whirl,
Requir'st a sudden stop. Unsay thy lie,
That may, in time, do somewhat.
Ben. I have done ;
For, since it pleases you it should be forg'd,
'Tis fit it should. Far be it from your slave,
To raise disturbance in your sacred breast.
Emp. Sebastian is my slave as well as thou ;
Nor durst offend my love by that presumption.
Ben. Most sure he ought not.
Emp. Then all means are wanting ;
No priest, no ceremonies of their sex :
Or, grant we these defects could be supply'd,
How could our prophet do an act so base,
So to resume his gifts, and curse my conquests,
By making me unhappy.' No, the slave
That told thee so absurd a story, lied.

Ben. Yet till this moment I have found him faithful :
He said he saw it too.

Emp. Dispatch ; what saw he ?

Ben. ' Truth is, considering with what earnestness
Sebastian pleaded for Almeyda's life,
Inhanc'd her beauty, dwelt upon her praise —

Emp. Oh, stupid and unthinking as I was !

I might have mark'd it too ; 'twas gross and palpable.

Ben. Methought I trac'd a love but ill disguis'd ;

And sent my spy, a sharp observing slave,

• 'T inform me better, if I guess'd aright.'
 He told me, that he saw Sebastian's page
 Run cross the marble square, who soon return'd,
 And after him there lagg'd a puffing friar ;
 Close wrapp'd he bore some secret instrument
 Of Christian superstition in his hand.
 My serv'ant follow'd fast, and, thro' a chink,
 Perceiv'd the royal captives hand in hand,
 And heard the hooded father mumbling charms,
 That make those misbelievers man and wife ;
 Which done, the spouses kiss'd with such a fervour,
 And gave such furious earnest of their flames,
 That their eyes sparkled, and their mantling blood
 Flew flushing o'er their faces. *You may guess the rest.*

• *Emp.* Hell confound them !

• *Ben.* The reverend father, with a holy leer,
 Saw he might well be spar'd, and soon withdrew :
 • This forc'd my servant to a quick retreat,
 • For fear to be discover'd. *Guess the rest.*

Emp. I do. My fancy is too exquisite,
 And tortures me with their imagin'd bliss.
 Some earthquake should have risen, and rent the ground,
 Have swallow'd him, and left the longing bride
 In agony of unaccomplish'd love. *[Walks disorderly.*
Enter the Mufti.

Ben. In an unlucky hour [Aside.]
 That fool intodes, raw in this great affair,
 And uninstructed how to stem the tide.

[Coming up to the Mufti aside.]
 The Emp'r'or must not marry, nor enjoy ;
 Keep to that point, stand firm ; for all's at stake.

Emp. *[Seeing him.]* You druggerman of Heav'n, must
 I attend

Your droaning prayers ? Why came ye not before ?
 Dost thou not know the captive King has dar'd
 To wed Almeyda ? Cancel me that marriage,
 And make her mine. About thy business, quick ;
 Expound thy Mahomet, make him speak my sense,
 Or he's no prophet here, and thou no Mufti,
 • Unlesis thou know'st the trick of thy vocation,
 • To wrest and rend the law to please thy prince.

Muf. Why, verily, the law is monstrous plain :

There's not one doubtful text in all the Alcoran,
Which can be wrench'd in favour to your project.

Emp. Forge one, and foist it into some bye-place
Of some old rotten roll: do't, I command thee:
Must I teach thee thy trade?

Muf. It cannot be;
For matrimony being the dearest point
Of law, the people have it all by heart:
A cheat on procreation will not pass.
• Besides, th' offence is so exorbitant; *[In a higher tone.]*
• To mingle with a misbelieving race,
• That speedy vengeance would pursue your crime,
• And holy Mahomet launch himself from Heav'n
• Before th' unready thunderbolt were form'd.'

Emp. *[Taking him by the throat with one hand, snatching out his sword with the other, and pointing it to his breast.]*
Slave! have I rais'd thee to this pomp and pow'r,
To preach against my will? Know, I am law;
And thou not Mahomet's messenger, but mine:
Make it, I charge thee, make my pleasures lawful;
• Or first I'll strip thee of thy ghostly greatness,
• Then send thee post to tell thy tale above,
• And bring thy vain memorials to thy prophet,
• Of justice done below for disobedience.'

Muf. For Heaven's sake hold; the respite of a moment,
To think for you—

Emp. And for thyself—

Muf. For both.

Ben. Disgrace, and death, and avarice have lost him!

[Aside.]

Muf. 'Tis true, our law forbids to wed a Christian;
But it forbids you not to ravish her.
You have a conqueror's right upon your slave:
And then, the more despite you do a Christian,
You serve the prophet more, who loaths that sect.

Emp. Oh, now it mends, and you talk reason, Mufti!
But stay; I promis'd freedom to Sebastian;
Now, shou'd I grant it, his revengeful soul
Would ne'er forgive his violated bed.

Muf. Kill him; for then you give him liberty:
His soul is from his earthly prison freed.

Emp.

Emp. How happy is the prince who has a churchman
So learn'd and pliant to expound his laws!

Ben. Two things I humbly offer to your prudence.

Emp. Be brief; but let not either thwart my love.

Ben. First, since our holy man has made rape lawful,
Fright her with that; proceed not yet to force:
Why should you pluck the green distasteful fruit
From the unwilling bough,
When it may ripen of itself, and fall?

Emp. Grant her a day; tho' that's too much to give
Out of a life which I devote to love.

Ben. Then next, to bar
All future hopes of her desir'd Sebastian,
Let Dorax be enjoin'd to bring his head.

Emp. [To the Mufti.] Go, Mufti, call him to receive
his orders. [Exit Mufti.

‘ I taste thy counsel; her desires, new rous'd,
‘ And yet unslak'd, will kindle in her fancy,
‘ And make her eager to renew the feast.’

Ben. [Aside.] Dorax, I know before, will disobey;
There's a foe's head well cropp'd—
But this hot love precipitates my plot,
And brings it to projection ere its time.

Enter Sebastian and Almeyda, hand in hand; upon sight
of the Emperor they separate, and seem disturbed.

Alm. He breaks at unawares upon our walks;
And, like a midnight wolf, invades the fold.
‘ Make speedy preparation of your soul,
‘ And bid it arm apace. He comes for answer;
‘ And brutal mischief sits upon his brow.’

Seb. Not the last sounding could surprise me more,
‘ That summons drowsy mortals to their doom:
‘ When call'd in haste, they fumble for their limbs,
‘ And tremble, unprovided for their charge.
‘ My sense has been so deeply plung'd in joys,
‘ The soul out-slept her hour; and, scarce awake,
‘ Would think, too late, and cannot. But brave minds,
‘ At worst, can dare their fate.’

Emp. [Coming up to them.] Have you perform'd
Your embassy, and treated with success?

Seb. I had not time.

Emp.

Emp. No, not for my affairs ;
But for your own too much.

Seb. You talk in clouds. Explain your meaning, Sir.

Emp. Explain yours first. What meant you hand in
And when you saw me, with a guilty start, [hand ;
You loos'd your hold, affrighted at my presence ?

Seb. Affrighted !

Emp. Yes, astonish'd and confounded.

Seb. What mak'st thou of thyself, and what of me ?
Art thou some ghost, some dæmon, or some god,
That I should stand astonish'd at thy sight ?
If thou couldst deem so meanly of my courage,
Why didst thou not engage me man for man,
And try the virtue of that Gorgon face,
To stare me into statue ?

Emp. Oh, thou art now recover'd ! but, by Heav'n,
Thou wert amaz'd at first, as if surpriz'd
At unexpected baseness brought to light :
For, know, ungrateful man, that kings, like gods,
Are every where ; walk in th' abyss of minds,
And view the dark receffes of the soul.

Seb. Base and ungrateful never was I thought ;
Nor, till this turn of fate, durst thou have call'd me.
But, since thou boast'st th' omniscience of a god,
Say, in what cranny of Sebastian's soul,
Unknown to me, so loath'd a crime is lodg'd ?

Emp. Thou hast not broke my trust repos'd in thee ?

Seb. Impos'd, but not receiv'd. Take back that falsehood.

Emp. Thou art not marry'd to Almeyda ?

Seb. Yes.

Emp. And own'st the usurpation of my love ?

Seb. I own it, in the face of Heav'n, and thee ;
No usurpation, but a lawful claim,
Of which I stand possess'd.

Emp. Sh' has chosen well,
Betwixt a captive and a conqueror.

Alm. Betwixt a monster and the best of men.

• He was the envy of his neighb'ring kings ;
• For him their fighing queens despis'd their lords,
• And virgin daughters blush'd when he was nam'd.
To share his noble chanis is more to me,
Than all the savage greatness of thy throne.

Seb.

Seb. Were I to chuse again, and knew my fate,
 For such a night, I would be what I am.
 The joys I have possess'd are ever mine ;
 Out of thy reach, behind eternity,
 Hid in the sacred treasure of the past ;
 But bless'd remembrance brings them hourly back.

Emp. Hourly indeed, who hast but hours to live !
 Oh, mighty purchase of a boasted bliss !
 To dream of what thou hadst one fugitive night,
 And never shalt have more.

‘ Seb. Barbarian, thou canst part us but a moment—
 ‘ We shall be one again in thy despite.
 ‘ Life is but air,
 ‘ That yields a passage to the whistling sword,
 ‘ And closes when 'tis gone.

‘ Alm. How can we better die, than close embrac'd,
 ‘ Sucking each others souls while we expire ;
 ‘ Which, so trans fus'd, and mounting both at once,
 ‘ The saints, deceiv'd, shall by a sweet mistake,
 ‘ Hand up thy soul for mine, and mine for thine.

‘ Emp. No, I'll untwist you ;
 ‘ I have occasion for your stay on earth :
 ‘ Let him mount first, and beat upon the wing,
 ‘ And wait an age for what I here detain ;
 ‘ Or sicken at immortal joys above,
 ‘ And languish for the Heav'n he left below.’ [join'd ?

Alm. Thou wilt not dare to break what Heav'n has

Emp. Not break the chain ; but change a rotten link,
 And rivet one to last. [join'd ?
 Think'st thou I come to argue right and wrong ?
 Why lingers Dorax thus ? Where are my guards,

[Benducar goes out for the guards, and returns.
 To drag that slave to death ? [Pointing to Sebastian.
 Now storm and rage ;
 Call vainly on thy prophet, then defy him,
 For wanting power to save thee.

Seb. That were to gratify thy pride. I'll shew thee
 How a man should, and how a king dare die :
 So even, that my soul shall walk with ease
 Out of its flesh, and shut out life as calmly
 As it does words ; without a sigh to note
 One struggle in the smooth dissolving frame.

Alm. [To the Emp.] Expect revenge from Heav'n, inhuman !
 Nor hope t' ascend Sebastian's holy bed. [man wretch !
 Flames, daggers, poisons, guard the sacred steps ;
 Those are the promis'd pleasures of my love.

Emp. And these might fright another, but not me :
 Or me, if I design, to give you pleasure.
 I seek my own ; and while that lasts, you live.

Enter two of the guards.

Go, bear the captive to a speedy death,
 And set my soul at ease.

Alm. I charge you, hold, ye ministers of death !
 Speak, my Sebastian,
 Plead for thy life ; Oh, ask it of the tyrant !
 'Tis no dishonour ; trust me, love, 'tis none.
 I would die for thee, but I cannot plead :
 My haughty heart disdains it, ev'n for thee.
 Still silent ! Will the King of Portugal
 Go to his death like a dumb sacrifice ?
 Beg him to save my life, in saving thine.

Seb. Farewel ; my life's not worth another word.

Emp. [To the guards.] Perform your orders.

Alm. Stay, take my farewell too.
 Farewel the greatness of Almeyda's soul !
 Look, tyrant, what excess of love can do ;
 It pulls me down, thus low, as to thy feet ; [Kneels to him.
 Nay, to embrace thy knees with loathing hands,
 Which blister when they touch thee. Yet ev'n thus,
 Thus far I can, to save Sebastian's life.

Emp. A secret pleasure trickles through my veins ;
 It works about the inlets of my soul,
 To feel thy touch ; and pity tempts the pass :
 But the tough metal of my heart resists ;
 'Tis warm'd with the soft fire, not melted down.

Alm. A flood of scalding tears will make it run.
 Spare him, Oh, spare ! Can you pretend to love,
 And have no pity ? Love and that are twins.
 Here will I grow ;
 Thus compas you with these supplanting cords,
 And pull so long till the proud fabric falls.'

Emp. Still kneel, and still embrace ; 'tis double pleasure
 So to be hugg'd, and see Sebastian die.

Alm. Look, tyrant, when thou nam'st Sebastian's death,
 Thy

Thy very executioners turn pale.
 Rough as they are, and harden'd in their trade
 Of death, they start at an anointed head,
 And tremble to approach — He hears me not,
 ‘ Nor minds th’ impression of a god on kings ;
 ‘ Because no stamp of Heav’n was on his soul ;
 ‘ But the resisting mass drove back the seal.
 ‘ Say, tho’ thy heart be rock of adamant,
 ‘ Yet rocks are not impregnable to bribes :
 ‘ Instruct me how to bribe thee — Name thy price ;
 Lo, I resign my title to the crown ;
 Send me to exile with the man I love,
 And banishment is empire.

Emp. ‘ Here’s my claim ;

‘ *[Clapping his hand to his sword.]*

‘ And this extinguish’d thine — thou giv’st me nothing.
 ‘ *Alm.* My father’s, mother’s, brother’s deaths I pardon :
 ‘ That’s somewhat, sure ; a mighty sum of murder,
 ‘ Of innocent and kindred blood struck off.
 ‘ My prayers and penance shall discount for these,
 ‘ And beg of Heav’n to charge the bill on me.
 ‘ Behold what price I offer, and how dear,
 ‘ To buy Sebastian’s life.
 ‘ *Emp.* Let after-reck’nings trouble fearful fools ;
 ‘ I’ll stand the trial of those trivial crimes.
 ‘ But, since thou begg’st me to prescribe my terms,
 ‘ The only I can offer are thy love ;
 ‘ And this one day of respite to resolve.’
 Grant or deny ; for thy next word is fate,
 And fate is deaf to pray’r.

Alm. May Heav’n be so, *[Rising up.]*
 At thy last breath, to thine. ‘ I curse thee not ;
 ‘ For who can better curse the plague or devil,
 ‘ Than to be what they are ? That curse be thine.’
 Now, do not speak, Sebastian ; for you need not :
 But die ; for I resign your life. Look, Heav’n,
 Almeyda dooms her dear Sebastian’s death !
 ‘ But is there Heav’n ? For I begin to doubt :
 ‘ The skies are hush’d, no grumbling thunders roll.
 ‘ Now take your swing, ye impious ; sin unpunish’d,
 ‘ Eternal Providence seems over-watch’d,
 ‘ And with a slumb’ring nod assents to murder.’

Enter

Enter Dorax, attended by three soldiers.

Emp. Thou mov'st a tortoise-pace to my relief.
Take hence that once-a-king, that sullen pride.
That swells to dumbness, lay him in the dungeon,
And sink him deep with irons ; 'tbat, when he would,
' He shall not groan to hearing. When I send,'
The next commands are death.

Alm. Then prayers are vain as curses.

Emp. Much at one

In a slave's mouth, against a monarch's pow'r.
This day thou hast to think ;
At night, if thou wilt curse, thou shalt curse kindly.
• Then I'll provoke thy lips, lay siege so close,
• That all thy sallying breath shall turn to blessings.
Make haste, seize, force her, bear her hence.

Alm. Farewel, my lost Sebastian !

I do not beg, I challenge justice now.

Oh, Pow'rs ! if kings be your peculiar care,
Why plays this wretch with your prerogative ?
Now flash him dead, now crumble him to ashes ;
• Or henceforth live confin'd in your own palace,
• And look not idly out upon a world
• That is no longer yours.

[She is carried off struggling : Emp. and Ben. follow.
[Sebastian struggles in his Guards arms, and shakes off one
of them ; but two others come in and hold him ; he speaks
not all the while.

Dor. I find I'm but a half-strain'd villain yet ; [Aside.
But mongrel-mischievous ; for my blood boil'd
To view this brutal act, and my stern soul
Tugg'd at my arm to draw in her defence.
Down thou rebelling Christian in my heart ;
Redeem thy fame on this Sebastian first ; [Walks a turn.
Then think on others wrongs, when thine are righted.
But how to right them ? On a slave, disarm'd,
Defenceless, and submitted to my rage ?
A base revenge is vengeance on myself — [Walks again.
I have it — and I thank thee, honest head,
Thus present to me at my great necessity —

[Comes up to Sebastian.
You know me not ?

Seb. I hear men call thee Dorax.

Dor.

Dor. 'Tis well; you know enough for once; you speak,
You were struck mute before. [too:

Seb. Silence became me then.

Dor. Yet we may talk hereafter.

Seb. Hereafter is not mine—

Dispatch thy work, good executioner.

[falshood

Dor. None of my blood were hangmen. Add that
To a long bill that yet remains unreckoned.

Seb. A king and thou can never have a reck'ning.

Dor. A greater sum, perhaps, than you can pay.
Mean time, I shall make bold t' increase your debt.

[Gives him his sword.

Take this, and use it at your greatest need.

Seb. This hand and this have been acquainted well.

[Looks on it.] It should have come before into my grasp,
To kill the ravisher.

Dor. Thou heard'st the tyrant's orders; guard thy life,
When 'tis attack'd, and guard it like a man.

Seb. I'm still without thy meaning; but I thank thee.

Dor. Thank me when I ask thanks; thank me with
Seb. Such surly kindness did I never see. [that.

Dor. [To the Captain of his Guards.] Muza, draw out
a file, pick man by man,

Such who dare die, and dear will sell their deaths.

Guard him to th' utmost—Now, conduct him hence,
And treat him as my person.

Seb. Something like

That voice, methinks, I should have somewhere heard;
But floods of woes have hurry'd it far off,

Beyond my ken of soul. [Exit Seb. with the soldiers.

Dor. But I shall bring him back, ungrateful man!
I shall, and set him full before thy sight,
When I shall front thee, like some staring ghost,
With all my wrongs about me—What, so soon
Return'd? This haste is boding.

Enter to him Emperor, Benducar, and Mufti.

Emp. She's still inexorable, still imperious,
And loud, as if, like Bacchus, born in thunder.
Be quick, ye false physicians of my mind,
Bring speedy death, or cure.

Ben. What can be counsell'd while Sebastian lives?
The vine will cling, while the tall poplar stands;

D O N S E B A S T I A N.

• *It* down, creeps to the next support,
• *As* closely there.

Emp. That's done with ease ; I speak him dead. Proceed.

Muf. Proclaim your marriage with Almeyda next,
That civil wars may cease. This gains the crowd :

Then you may safely force her to your will :

• For people side with violence and injustice,

• When done for public good.'

Emp. Preach thou that doctrine.

Ben. Th' unreasonable fool has broach'd a truth [*Aside.*]
That blasts my hopes : but since 'tis gone so far,
He shall divulge Almeyda is a Christian.

If that produce no tumult, I despair.

Emp. Why speaks not Dorax ?

Dor. Because my soul abhors to mix with him.

Sir, let me bluntly say, you went too far,

To trust the preaching pow'r on state affairs

• To him, or any heav'nly demagogue.

• Tis a limb lopp'd from your prerogative ;

And so much of Heaven's image blotted from you.

• *Muf.* Sure thou hast never heard of holy men

• (So Christians call them) fam'd in state affairs;

• Such as in Spain, Ximenes, Albornez,

• In England, Wolsey : match me these with laymen.

• *Dor.* How you triumph in one or two of these,

• Born to be statesmen, happ'ning to be churchmen !

• Thou call'st them holy ; so their function was :

• But, tell me, Mufti, which of them were saints ?

• Next, Sir, to you ; the sum of all is this,

• Since he claims pow'r from Heaven, and not from kings,

• When 'tis his int'rest, he can int'rest Heav'n

• To preach you down ; and ages oft depend

• On hours, uninterrupted, in the chair.

• *Emp.* I'll trust his preaching, while I rule his pay ;

• And I dare trust my Africans to hear

• Whatever he dare preach.

• *Dor.* You know them not.

• The genius of your Moors is mutiny ;

• They scarcely want a guide to move their madness.

• Prompt to rebel on every weak pretence ;

• Blustering when courted, crouching when oppress'd ;

• Wise to themselves, and fools to all the world ;

DON SEBASTIAN.



Restless in change, and perjur'd to a proverb :
They love religion sweeten'd to the sense ;
A good, luxurious, palatable faith.
Thus Vice and Godliness, prepost'rous pair !
Ride cheek by jowl : but churchmen hold the reins.
And whene'er kings would lower clergy greatness,
They learn, too late, what power the preachers have,
And whose the subjects are. The Mufti knows it ;
Nor dares deny what pass'd betwixt us two.'

Emp. No more ; whate'er he said was my command.

Dor. Why, then, no more, since you will hear no more.
Some kings are resolute to their own ruin.

Emp. Without your meddling where you are not ask'd,
Obey your orders, and dispatch Sebastian.

Dor. Trust my revenge ; be sure I wish him dead.

Emp. What mean'it thou ? What's thy wishing to my
Dispatch him : rid me of the man I loath. [will ?

Dor. I hear you, Sir : I'll take my time, and do't.

Emp. Thy time ! what's all thy time ? What's thy
To my one hour of ease ? No more replies ; [whole life,
But see thou dost it ; or —

Dor. Choak in that threat. I can say Or, as loud.

Emp. 'Tis well ; I see my words have no effect.
But I may send a message to dispose you. [Is going off.

Dor. Expect an answer worthy of that message.

Muf. The Prophet ow'd him this : [Aside.
And, thank'd be Heaven, he has it.

Ben. By holy Alha, I conjure you, stay,
And judge not rashly of so brave a man.

[Draws the Emperor aside, and whispers him.
I'll give you reasons why he cannot execute
Your orders now, and why he will hereafter.

Muf. Benducar is a fool to bring him off : [Aside.
I'll work my own revenge, and speedily.

Ben. The fort is his, the soldiers hearts are his ;
A thousand Christian slaves are in the castle,
Which he can free to reinforce his pow'r ;
Your troops far off, beleaguering Larache,
Yet in the Christian hands.'

Emp. I grant all this ;
But grant me he must die.

Ben. He shall, by poison ;

'Tis here, the deadly drug prepar'd in powder,
Hot as hell fire—then, to prevent his soldiers
From rising to revenge their general's death;
While he is struggling with his mortal pangs,
The rabble on the sudden may be rais'd
To seize the castle.

Emp. Do't; 'tis left to thee.

Ben. Yet more—but clear your brow; for he observes.

[*They whisper again.*]

Dor. What, will the fav'rite prop my falling fortunes?
Oh, prodigy of court! [Aside.]

[*Emp. and Ben. return to Dor.*]

Emp. Your friend has fully clear'd your innocence:
I was too hasty to condemn unheard;
And you, perhaps, too prompt in your replies.
As far as fits the majesty of kings,
I ask excuse.

Dor. I'm sure I meant it well.

Emp. I know you did — this to our love renew'd.

[*Emp. drinks.*]

Benducar, fill to Dorax.

[*Ben. turns, and mixes a powder in it.*]

Dor. Let it go round; for all of us have need
To quench our heats: 'tis the King's health, Benducar,

[*He drinks.*]

And I would pledge it, tho' I knew 'twere poison.

Ben. Another bowl; for what the King has touch'd,
And you have pledg'd, is sacred to your loves.

[*Drinks out of another bowl.*]

Muf. Since charity becomes my calling, thus
Let me provoke your friendship: and Heaven bless it,
As I intend it well—

[*Drinks, and, turning aside, pours some drops out of a little
vial into the bowl, then presents it to Dorax.*]

Dor. Heav'n make thee honest:

On that condition we shall soon be friends.

[*Drinks.*]

Muf. Yes, at our meeting in another world;

[*Aside.*]

For thou hast drunk thy passport out of this.

' Not the Nonacrian font, nor Lethe's lake,

' Could sooner numb thy nimble faculties

' Than this, to sleep eternal.'

Emp.

Emp. Now, farewell, Dorax ; this was our first quarrel ;
And I dare prophecy, will prove our last.

[Exit Emp. with Ben. and the Mufti.]

Dor. It may be so—I'm strangely discompos'd ;
Quick shootings thro' my limbs, and pricking pains,
Qualms at my heart, convulsions in my nerves,
Shiv'rings of cold, and burnings of my entrails,
Within my little world make medley-war :
Lose and regain, beat, and are beaten back,
As momentary victors quit their ground.
Can it be poison ? Poison's of one tenour,
Or hot, or cold ; this neither, and yet both.
Some deadly draught, some enemy of life
Boils in my bowels, and works out my soul.
Ingratitude's the growth of every crime ;
Afric, the scene remov'd, is Portugal.
Of all court-service learn the common lot ;
To-day 'tis done, to-morrow 'tis forgot.
Oh, were that all !—my honest corpse must lie
Expos'd to scorn and public infamy :
My shameful death will be divulg'd alone ;
The worth and honour of my soul unknown. [Exit.]

A NIGHT-SCENE, of the Mufti's Garden, where an Arbour is discovered.

Enter Antonio.

Ant. She names herself Moraynia, the Mufti's only daughter, and a virgin : This is the time and place that she appointed in her letter, yet she comes not. Why,
thou sweet, delicious creature, why to torture me with
thy delay ? Dar'st thou be false to thy assignation ?
What, in the cool and silence of the night, and to a
new lover ? Pox on the hypocrite, thy father, for in-
structing thee so little in the sweetest point of his reli-
gion ! Hark ! I hear the rustling of her silk mantle.
Now she comes ! now she comes !—No, hang it, that
was but the whistling of the wind through the orange-
trees. Now again, I hear the pit-a-pat of a pretty
foot thro' the dark alley—No, 'tis the son of a mare
that's broken loose, and munching upon the melons.—
Oh, the misery of an expecting lover ! Well, I'll e'en

despair, go into my arbour, and try to sleep ; in a dream I shall enjoy her in despight of her.

[Goes to the arbour, and lies down.]

Enter Johayma, wrapt up in a Moorish Mantle.

Job. Thus far my love has carried me, almost without my knowledge whither I was going : ' shall I go on, shall I discover myself ? —— What an injury am I doing to my old husband ! —— Yet what injury, since he's old and has three wives, and six concubines besides me ! 'tis but stealing my own tythe from him.'

[She comes a little nearer the arbour.]

Ant. [Raising himself a little, and looking.] At last 'tis she, this is no illusion I am sure ; 'tis a true she-devil of flesh and blood ; and she could never have taken a fitter time to tempt me ——

Job. He's young and handsome ——

Ant. Yes, well enough, I thank nature. [Aside.]

Job. And I am yet neither old nor ugly : sure he will not refuse me.

Ant. No, thou may'st pawn thy maidenhead upon't he wonnot. [Aside.]

Job. The Mufti would feast himself upon other women, and keep me fasting.

Ant. Oh, the holy curmudgeon ! [Aside.]

Job. Would preach abstinence, and practise luxury ; but I thank my stars, I have edified more by his example than his precept.

Ant. Most divinely argued : she's the best casuist in all Afric. [Aside.]

[He rushes out and embraces her.] I can hold no longer from embracing thee, my dear Morayma ; ' the old unconscionable whoreson thy father, could he expect cold chastity from a child of his begetting ?'

Job. What nonsense do you talk ? Do you take me for the Mufti's daughter ?

Ant. Why are you not, Madam ?

[Throwing off her barnas.]

Job. I find you had an appointment with Morayma.

Ant. By all that's good, the nauseous wife. [Aside.]

Job. What, you are confounded, and stand mute ?

Ant. Somewhat nonplust I confess, to hear you deny your name so positively : why, are not you Morayma,

the

the Mufti's daughter? Did not I see you with him, did not he present me to you? 'Were you not so charitable as to give me money? Ay, and to tread upon my foot, and squeeze my hand too, if I may be so bold to remember you of past favours?'

'Job. And you see I am come to make them good; but I am neither Morayma nor the Mufti's daughter.'

'Ant. Nay, I know not that: but I am sure he is old enough to be your father; and either father, or reverend father I heard you call him.'

'Job. Once again, how came you to name Morayma?'

'Ant. Another damned mistake of mine: for asking one of my fellow-slaves, who were the chief ladies about the house, he answered me, Morayma and Jochayma; but she, it seems, is his daughter, with a pox to her, and you are his beloved wife.'

'Job. 'Say your beloved mistress, if you please; for that's the title I desire.' This moon-shine grows offensive to my eyes: come, shall we walk into the arbour? there we may rectify all mistakes.'

'Ant. That's close and dark.'

'Job. And are those faults to lovers?'

'Ant. But there I cannot please myself with the sight of your beauty.'

'Job. Perhaps you may do better.'

'Ant. But there's not a breath of air stirring.'

'Job. The breath of lovers is the sweetest air; but you are fearful.'

'Ant. I am considering indeed, that if am taken with you—'

'Job. The best way to avoid it, is to retire, where we may not be discovered.'

'Ant. Where lodges your husband?'

'Job. Just against the face of this open walk.'

'Ant. Then he has seen us already, for ought I know.'

'Job. You make so many difficulties, I fear I am displeasing to you.'

'Ant. [Aside.] If Morayma comes, and takes me in the arbour with her, I have made a fine exchange of that diamond for this pebble.'

'Job. You are much fallen off, let me tell you, from the fury of your first embrace.'

Ant. I confess, I was somewhat too furious at first, but you will forgive the transport of my passion; now I have considered it better, I have a qualm of conscience.

Job. Of conscience! why, what has conscience to do with two young lovers that have opportunity?

‘ *Ant.* Why truly, conscience is something to blame for interposing in our matters: but how can I help it, if I have a scruple to betray my master?

‘ *Job.* There must be something more in’t? for your conscience was very quiet when you took me for Moramia.

‘ *Ant.* I grant you, Madam, when I took you for his daughter; for then I might have made you an honourable amends by marriage.

‘ *Job.* You, Christians, are such pecking sinners, you tremble at a shadow in the moonshine.

‘ *Ant.* And you, Africans, are such termagants, you stop at nothing. I must be plain with you, you are married, and to a holy man, the head of your religion. Go back to your chamber, go back, I say, and consider of it for this night; as I will do on my part: I will be true to you; and invent all the arguments I can to comply with you; and who knows, but at our next meeting, the sweet devil may have more power over me? I am true flesh and blood, I can tell you that for your comfort.’

Job. ‘ Flesh without blood I think thou art; or if any, ‘ tis as cold as that of fishes.’ But I’ll teach thee, to thy cost, what vengeance is in store for refusing a lady, who has offered thee her love—Help, help, there! will nobody come to my assistance?

‘ *Ant.* What do you mean, Madam? for heaven’s sake peace; your husband will hear you; think of your own danger, if you will not think of mine.

Job. Ingrateful wretch, thou deservest no pity: help, help, husband; or I shall be ravished: the villain will be too strong for me. Help, help, for pity of a poor distressed creature.

Ant. Then I have nothing but impudence to assist me: I must drown her clamour, whate’er comes on’t.

[He takes out his flute, and plays as loud as he can possibly, and she continues crying out.

Enter

Enter the Mufti in his night-gown, and two servants.

Muf. Oh, thou villain, what horrible impiety art thou committing? What! ravishing the wife of my bosom? Take him away, ganch him, impale him, rid the world of such a monster.

[*Servants seize him.*]

Ant. Mercy, dear master, mercy: hear me first, and after, if I have deserved hanging, spare me not. What have you seen to provoke you to this cruelty?

Muf. I have heard the outcries of my wife; the bleatings of the poor innocent lamb: 'seen nothing 'sayest thou? If I see the lamb lie bleeding, and the 'butcher by her with his knife drawn, and bloody,' is not that evidence sufficient of the murder? I come too late, and the execution is already done.

Ant. Pray think in reason, Sir, is a man to be put to death for a similitude? 'No violence has been committed; none intended: the lamb's alive; and if I durst tell you so, no more a lamb than I am a butcher.'

Job. How's that, villain, darest thou accuse me?

Ant. Be patient, Madam, and speak but truth, and I'll do any thing to serve you: 'I say again, and swear it too, I'll do any thing to serve you.'

Job. [Aside.] I understand him; but, I fear, 'tis now too late to save him. — Pray hear him speak, husband; perhaps he may say something for himself; I know not.

Muf. Speak thou, has he not violated my bed, and thy honour?

Job. I forgive him freely, for he has done nothing. What he will do hereafter, to make me satisfaction, himself best knows.

Ant. Any thing, any thing, sweet Madam: I shall refuse no drudgery.

Muf. But did he mean no mischief? Was he endeavouring nothing?

Job. In my conscience, I begin to doubt he did not.

Muf. 'Tis impossible; then what meant all these outcries?

Job. I heard music in the garden, and at an unseasonable time of night, and I stole softly out of my bed, as imagining it might be he.

Muf. How's that, Johayma? Imagining it was he, and yet you went?

Job.

‘ Job. Why not, my Lord, am not I the mistress of the family? and is it not my place to see good orders kept in it? I thought he might have allured some of the she-slaves to him; and was resolved to prevent what might have been betwixt him and them:’ when, on the sudden, he rushed out upon me, caught me in his arms with such a fury—

‘ Muf. I have heard enough, away with him.

‘ Job. Mistaking me, no doubt, for one of his fellow-slaves: with that, affrighted as I was, I discovered myself, and cried aloud:’ but as soon as ever he knew me, the villain let me go, and I must needs say, he started back, as if I were some serpent; and was more afraid of me than I of him.

Muf. Oh, thou corrupter of my family, that’s cause enough of death; once again, away with him.

Job. What, for an intended trespass? No harm has been done, whate’er may be. He cost you five hundred crowns, I take it.

Muf. Thou sayest true, a very considerable sum: he shall not die, though he had committed folly with a slave; ‘tis too much to lose by him.

Ant. My only fault has ever been to love playing in the dark, and the more she cried, the more I played; that it might be seen I intended nothing to her.

Muf. To your kennel, firrah, mortify your flesh, and consider in whose family you are.

Job. And one thing more, remember from henceforth to obey better.

Muf. [Aside.] For all her smoothness, I am not quite cured of my jealousy; but I have thought of a way that will clear my doubts.

[Exit Mufti with Joh. and servants.

Ant. I am mortified sufficiently already, without the help of his ghostly counsel. Fear of death has gone farther with me in two minutes, than my conscience would have gone in two months. I find myself in a very dejected condition, all over me; poor sin lies dormant; ‘ concupisence is retired to his winter quarters;’ and if Morayma should now appear, I say no more, but, alas, for her and me!

[Morayma comes out of the arbour, she steals behind him, and claps him on the back.

Mor.

Mor. And if Morayma should appear, as she does appear, alas, you say for her and you!

Ant. Art thou there, my sweet temptation! my eyes, my life, my soul, my all!

Mor. A mighty compliment, when all these, by your own confession, are just nothing.

Ant. Nothing, till thou camest to new create me; thou dost not know the power of thy own charms: let me embrace thee, and thou shalt see how quickly I can turn wicked.

‘ *Mor.* [Stepping back.] Nay, if you are so dangerous, ‘ tis best keeping you at a distance; I have no mind to ‘ warm a frozen snake in my bosom; he may chance to ‘ recover, and sting me for my pains.

‘ *Ant.* Consider what I have suffered for thy sake already; and make me some amends: two disappointments in a night! Oh, cruel creature!

‘ *Mor.* And you may thank yourself for both: I came ‘ eagerly to the charge, before my time, thro’ the back- ‘ walk behind the arbour; and you, like a fresh-water ‘ soldier, stood guarding the pass before: if you missed ‘ the enemy, you may thank your own dulness.

‘ *Ant.* Nay, if you will be using stratagems, you shall ‘ give me leave to make use of my advantages, now I have ‘ you in my power: we are fairly met; I’ll try it out, ‘ and give no quarter.

‘ *Mor.* By your favour, Sir, we meet upon treaty now ‘ and not upon defiance.

‘ *Ant.* If that be all, you shall have *carte blanche* immediately; for I long to be ratifying.’

Mor. No, now I think on’t, you are already entered into articles with my enemy Johayma: any thing to serve you, Madam; I shall refuse no drudgery: whose words were those, gentleman? Was that like a cavalier of honour?

‘ *Ant.* Not very heroic; but self-preservation is a point ‘ above honour and religion too—Antonio was a rogue, I ‘ must confess; but you must give me leave to love him.

‘ *Mor.* To beg your life so basely; and to present ‘ your sword to your enemy: Oh, recreant!

‘ *Ant.* If I had died honourably, my fame indeed would ‘ have sounded loud, but I should never have heard the

blast. Come, don't make yourself worse-natured than you are ; to save my life, you would be content I should promise any thing.

Mor. Yes, if I were sure you would perform nothing.

Ant. Can you suspect I would leave you for Johayma ?

Mor. No, but I can expect you would have both of us : love is covetous, I must have all of you ; heart for heart is an equal truck : in short, I am younger ; I think handsomer, and am sure I love you better ; she has been my step-mother these fifteen years ; you think that's her face you see, but 'tis only a daubed wizard : she wears an armour of proof upon't ; an inch thick of paint, besides 'the wash : her face is so fortified, that you can make no approaches to it, without a shovel. But for her constancy, I can tell you for your comfort, she will love till death, I mean till yours ; for when she has worn out, she will certainly dispatch you to another world, for fear of telling tales ; as she has already served three slaves, your predecessors of happy memory in her favours.' She has made my pious father a three-piled cuckold to my knowledge ; and now she would be robbing me of my single sheep too.

Ant. Pr'ythee prevent her then ; and at least take the shearing of me first.

Mor. No, I'll have a butcher's pen'worth of you ; first secure the carcals, and then take the fleece into the bargain.

Ant. Why sure, you did not put yourself and me to all this trouble, for a dry come-off : by this hand—

[Taking it.]

Mor. Which you shall never touch, but upon better assurances than you imagine. [Pulling her hand away.]

Ant. I'll marry thee, and make a Christian of thee, thou pretty damned infidel.

Mor. I mean you shall ; but no earnest, till the bargain be made before witness ; there's love enough to be had, and as much as you can turn you to, never doubt, but all upon honourable terms.

Ant. I vow and swear by Love ; and he's a deity in all religions.

Mor. But never to be trusted in any : he has another name too, of a worse sound. Shall I trust an oath, when I see

I see your eyes languishing, your cheeks flushing, and can hear your heart throbbing? No, I'll not come near you: he's a foolish physician who will feel the pulse of a patient, that has the plague spots upon him.

Ant. Did one ever hear a little moppet argue so perversely against so good a cause! Come, pr'ythee let me anticipate a little of my revenue.

Mor. You would fain be fingering your rents before-hand; but that makes a man an ill husband ever after. Consider, marriage is a painful vocation, as you shall prove it: manage your incomes as thriftily as you can, you shall find a hard task on't to make even at the year's end, and yet to live decently.

Ant. I came with a Christian intention to revenge myself upon thy father, for being the head of a false religion.

Mor. And so you shall; I offer you his daughter for your second: but since you are so pressing, meet me under my window to-morrow night, body for body, about this hour; I'll slip down out of my lodging, and bring my father in my hand.

Ant. How! thy father!

Mor. I mean, all that's good of him; his pearls, and jewels, his whole contents, his heart and soul; as much as ever I can carry! I'll leave him his Alcoran; that's revenue enough for him: every page of it is gold and diamonds. He has the turn of an eye, a demure smile, and a godly cant, that are worth millions to him. I forgot to tell you, that I will have a slave prepared at the postern gate, with two horses ready saddled: no more, for I fear I may be missed; and think I hear them calling for me—if you have constancy and courage—

Ant. Never doubt it: and love in abundance, to wander with thee all the world over.

Mor. The value of twelve hundred thousand crowns in a casket!

Ant. A heavy burden, heaven knows! but we must pray for patience to support it.

Mor. Besides a willing tit that will venture her corps with you:—come, I know you long to have a parting blow with me; and therefore to shew I am in charity—

[He kisses her.

Ant. Once more for pity ; that I may keep the flavour upon my lips till we meet again.

Mor. No : frequent charities make bold beggars : and besides, I have learned of a falconer, never to feed up a hawk when I would have him fly : that's enough — but if you would be nibbling, here's a hand to stay your stomach.

[Kissing her hand.]

Ant. Thus conquered infidels, that wars may cease, Are forc'd to give their hands, and sign the peace.

Mor. Thus Christians are outwitted by the foe ; You had her in your pow'r, and let her go. If you release my hand, the fault's not mine ; You shou'd have made me seal as well as sign.

[She runs off, he follows her to the door ; then comes back again, and goes out at the other.]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, Benducar's Palace in the Castle of Alcazar.

Enter Benducar.

BENDUCAR.

MY future fate, the colour of my life,
My all depends on this important hour :
This hour my lot is weighing in the scales,
And heav'n, perhaps, is doubting what to do.
Almeyda and a crown have push'd me forward :
'Tis fix'd, the tyrant must not ravish her ;
He and Sebastian stand betwixt my hopes ;
He most ; and therefore first to be dispatch'd.
These and a thousand things are to be done
In the short compass of this rowling night,
And nothing yet perform'd,
None of my emissaries yet return'd.

Enter Haly, first servant.

Oh, Haly, thou hast held me long in pain.
What hast thou learn'd of Dorax ? Is he dead ?
Haly. Two hours I warily have watch'd his palace ;
All doors are shut, no servant peeps abroad ;

Some

' Some officers with striding haste pass'd in,
 ' While others outward went on quick dispatch ;
 ' Sometimes hush'd silence seem'd to reign within ;
 ' Then cries confus'd, and a joint clamour follow'd ;
 ' Then lights went gliding by, from room to room,
 ' And shot like thwarting meteors cross the house.
 ' Not daring further to enquire, I came
 ' With speed, to bring you this imperfect news.
 ' Bend. Hence I conclude him either dead or dying :
 ' His mournful friends, summon'd to take their leaves,
 ' Are throng'd about his couch, and sit in council.
 ' What those caballing captains may design,
 ' I must prevent, by being first in action.
 ' To Muley Zeydan fly with speed ; desire him
 ' To take my last instructions ; tell the importance,
 ' And haste his presence here. [Exit Haly.
 ' How has this poison lost its wonted way ?
 ' It should have burnt its passage, not have linger'd
 ' In the blind labyrinths and crooked turnings
 ' Of human composition ; now it moves
 ' Like a slow fire that works against the wind,
 ' As if his stronger stars had interpos'd.

' Enter Hamet.

' Well, Hamet, are our friends the rabble rais'd ?
 ' From Mustapha what message ?
 ' Ham. What you wish :
 ' The streets are thicker in this noon of night,
 ' Than at the mid-day sun : a drouzy horror
 ' Sits on their eyes, like Fear, not well awake :
 ' All croud in heaps, as at a night-alarm
 ' The bees drive out upon each others backs,
 ' T' imboss their hives in clusters : all ask news :
 ' Their busy captain runs the weary round
 ' To whisper orders, and commanding silence,
 ' Makes not noise cease but deafens it to murmurs.
 ' Bend. Night wastes apace : when, when will he ap-
 ' Ham. He only waits your summons. [pear ?
 ' Bend. Haste their coming.
 ' Let secrecy and silence be enjoin'd
 ' In their close march. What news from the lieutenant ?
 ' Ham. I left him at the gate firm to your interest,
 ' T' admit the townsmen at their first appearance.

‘ Bend. Thus far ’tis well. Go hasten Mustapha.

[Exit Hamet.]

Enter Orchan, *the third servant.*

‘ O, Orchan, did I think thy diligence
 ‘ Would lag behind the rest? What from the Mufti?
 ‘ Orc. I sought him round his palace; made enquiry
 ‘ Of all the slaves: in short I used your name,
 ‘ And urg’d the importance home; but had for answer,
 ‘ That since the shut of evening none had seen him.

‘ Bend. O the curst fate of all conspiracies!

‘ They move on many springs; if one but fail,
 ‘ The restiff machine stops—In an ill hour he’s absent;
 ‘ ’Tis the first time, and sure will be the last
 ‘ That e’er a Mufti was not in the way,
 ‘ When tumults and rebellion should be broach’d.
 ‘ Stay by me: thou art resolute and faithful;
 ‘ I have employment worthy of thy arm. [Walks.]

Enter Muley-Zeydan.

M. Zeyd. You see me come impatient of my hopes,
 And eager as the courser for the race.
 Is all in readiness?

Bend. All but the Mufti.

M. Zeyd. We must go on without him.

Bend. True, we must;

For ’tis ill stopping in the full career,
 Howe’er the leap be dangerous and wide.

Orc. [Looking out.] I see the blaze of torches from afar;
 And hear the trampling of thick-beating feet;
 This way they move.

Bend. No doubt, the Emperor.

We must not be surpriz’d in conference.

Trust to my management the tyrant’s death;
 And haste yourself to join with Mustapha.

‘ The officer who guards the gate is yours;
 ‘ When you have gain’d that pass, divide your force;
 ‘ Yourself in person head one chosen half,
 ‘ And march t’ oppres the faction in consult
 ‘ With dying Dorax: Fate has driven ’em all
 ‘ Into the net: you must be bold and sudden:
 ‘ Spare none, and if you find him struggling yet
 ‘ With pangs of death, trust not his rowling eyes

And

‘ And heavy gasps ; for poison may be false,
 ‘ The home thrust of a friendly sword is sure.’

M. Zeyd. Doubt not my conduct : they shall be sure—
 Mercy may wait without the gate one night, [priz'd ;
 At morn I'll take her in—

Bend. Here lies your way,
 You meet your brother there.

M. Zeyd. May we ne'er meet :
 For like the twins of Leda, when I mount,
 He gallops down the skies— [Exit *M. Zeyd.*]

Bend. He comes ; now heart
 Be ribb'd with iron for this one attempt ;
 ‘ Set ope thy sluices, send thy vigorous blood
 ‘ Through every active limb for my relief ;’
 Then take thy rest within thy quiet cell,
 For thou shalt drum no more.

Enter Emperor, and guards attending him.

Emp. What news of our affairs, and what of Dorax ?
 Is he no more ? Say that, and make me happy.

Bend. May all your enemies be like that dog,
 Whose parting soul is labouring at the lips.

Emp. The people, are they rais'd ?

Bend. And marshall'd too ;
 Just ready for the march.

Emp. Then I'm at ease.

Bend. The night is yours, the glittering host of Heav'n
 Shines but for you ; but most the star of love,
 That twinkles you to fair Almeyda's bed.
 Oh ! there's a joy, to melt in her embrace,
 Dissolve in pleasure,
 And make the gods curse immortality,
 That so they could not die.
 But haste and make 'em yours.

Emp. I will ; and yet
 A kind of weight hangs heavy at my heart ;
 My flagging soul flies under her own pitch ;
 Like fowl in air too damp, and lugs along,
 As if she were a body in a body,
 And not a mounting substance made of fire.
 ‘ My senses too are dull and stupify'd,
 ‘ Their edge rebated ;’ sure some ill approaches,

And some kind spirit knocks softly at my soul,
To tell me Fate's at hand.

Bend. Mere fancies all.

‘ Your soul has been before-hand with your body,
‘ And drunk so deep a draught of promis'd bliss,
‘ She slumbers o'er the cup ;’ no danger's near,
But of a surfeit at too full a feast.

Emp. It may be so ; ‘ it looks so like the dream

‘ That overtook me at my waking hour
‘ This morn ; and dreams they say are then divine,
‘ When all the balmy vapours are exhal'd,
‘ And some o'erpow'ring god continues sleep.
‘ ’Twas then methought Almeyda, smiling, came
‘ Attended with a train of all her race,
‘ Whom in the rage of empire I had murder'd.
‘ But now, no longer foes, they gave me joy
‘ Of my new conquest, and with helping hands
‘ Heav'd me into our holy prophet's arms,
‘ Who bore me in a purple cloud to Heav'n.

‘ *Bend.* Good omen, Sir ; I wish you in that heav'n

‘ Your dreams portend you,
‘ Which presages death —

[Aside.]

‘ *Emp.* Thou too wert there ;

‘ And thou methought didst push me from below,
‘ With thy full force to Paradise.

‘ *Bend.* Yet better.

‘ *Emp.* Ha ! what's that grizly fellow that attends thee ?

‘ *Bend.* Why ask you, Sir ?

‘ *Emp.* For he was in my dream ;

‘ And help'd to heave me up.

‘ *Bend.* With prayers and wishes ;

‘ For I dare swear him honest.

‘ *Emp.* That may be ;

‘ But yet he looks damnation.

‘ *Bend.* You forget

The face would please you better : do you love,
And can you thus forbear ?

Emp. I'll head my people ;

Then think of dalliance when the danger's o'er.

‘ My warlike spirits work now another way ;

‘ And my soul's tun'd to trumpets.’

Bend.

Bend. You debase yourself,
To think of mixing with th' ignoble herd.
Let such perform the servile work of war,
Such who have no Almeyda to enjoy.

‘ What, shall the people know their god-like prince
‘ Skulk'd in a nightly skirmish? Stole a conquest,
‘ Headed a rabble, and profan'd his person,
‘ Shoulder'd with filth, borne in a tide of ordure,
‘ And stifled with their rank offensive sweat?
‘ *Emp.* I am off again: I will not prostitute
‘ The regal dignity so far, to head 'em.’

Bend. ‘ There spoke a king.’
Dismiss your guards to be employ'd elsewhere
In ruder combats: you will want no seconds
‘ In those alarms you seek.’

Emp. Go join the crowd. [To the Guards.
Benducar, thou shalt lead 'em in my place. [Ex. Guards.
The god of love once more has shot his fires
Into my soul; and my whole heart receives him.
Almeyda now returns with all her charms;
I feel her as she glides along my veins,
And dances in my blood. So when our prophet
Had long been hamm'ring in his lonely cell,
Some dull, insipid, tedious Paradise,
A brisk Arabian girl came tripping by;
Passing, she cast at him a side-long glance,
And look'd behind in hopes to be pursu'd:
He took the hint, embrac'd the flying fair:
And having found his heav'n, he fix'd it there. [Exit.

Bend. That Paradise thou never shalt posses.
His death is easy now, his guards are gone;
And I can sin but once to seize the throne.

‘ All after-acts are sanctify'd by power.

‘ *Orc.* Command my sword and life.

‘ *Bend.* I thank thee, Orchon,
‘ And shall reward thy faith: this master-key
‘ Frees every lock, and leads us to his person:
‘ And should we miss our blow, as Heav'n forbid,
‘ Secures retreat: leave open all behind us;
‘ And first set wide the Mufti's garden gate,
‘ Which is his private passage to the palace:
‘ For there our mutineers appoint to meet,

‘ And

D O N S E B A S T I A N.

ence we may have aid.' Now sleep ye stars,
Lately o'erwatch the fate of kings;
Be all propitious influences barr'd,
And none but murd'rous planets mount the guard.

[*Exeunt.*

A NIGHT-SCENE of the Mufti's Garden.

Enter the Mufti alone, in a Slave's Habit, like that of Antonio's.

Muf. This 'tis to have a sound head-piece ; by this I have got to be chief of my religion ; that is, honestly speaking, to teach others what I neither know nor believe myself. For what's Mahomet to me, but that I get by him ? Now for my policy of this night : I have mew'd up my suspected spouse in her chamber. No more embassies to that lusty young stallion of a gard'ner. Next, my habit of a slave ; I have made myself as like him as I can, all but his youth and vigour ; which when I had, I pass'd my time as well as any of my holy predecessors. Now, walking under the windows of my seraglio -- if Johayma look out, she will certainly take me for Antonio, and call to me ; and by that I shall know what concupiscence is working in her ; she cannot come down to commit iniquity, there's my safety ; but if she peep, if she put her nose abroad, there's demonstration of her pious will ; and I'll not make the first precedent for a churchman to forgive injuries.

Enter Morayma running to him with a casket in her hand, and embracing him.

Mor. Now I can embrace you with a good conscience ; here are the pearls and jewels, here's my father.

Muf. I am indeed thy father ; but how the devil didst thou know me in this disguise ? And what pearls and jewels dost thou mean ?

Mor. [Going back.] What have I done, and what will now become of me !

Muf. Art thou mad, Morayma ?

Mor. I think you'll make me so.

Muf. Why, what have I done to thee ? Recollect thyself, and speak sense to me.

Mor. Then give me leave to tell you, you are the worst of fathers.

Muf.

Muf. Did I think I had begotten such a monster? Proceed, my dutiful child, proceed, proceed.

Mor. You have been raking together a mass of wealth, by indirect and wicked means: the spoils of orphans are in these jewels, and the tears of widows in these pearls.

Muf. Thou amazest me!

Mor. I would do so. This casket is loaded with your sins; 'tis the cargo of rapines, simony, and exortions; the iniquity of thirty years Muftiship converted into diamonds.

Muf. Would some rich, railing rogue would say as much to me, that I might squeeze his purse for scandal.

Mor. No, Sir; you get more by pious fools than railers, when you insinuate into their families, manage their fortunes whilst they live, and beggar their heirs by getting legacies when they die. And do you think I'll be the receiver of your theft? I discharge my conscience of it: here, take again your filthy mammon, and restore it, you had best, to the true owners.

Muf. I am finely documented by my own daughter.

Mor. And a great credit for me to be so. Do but think how decent a habit you have on, and how becoming your function to be disguised like a slave, and eves-dropping under the women's windows, to be saluted, as you deserve it richly, with a piss-pot. If I had not known you casually by your shambling gait, and a certain reverend awkwardness that is natural to all of your function, here you had been exposed to the laughter of your own servants; who have been in search of you thro' the whole Seraglio, peeping under every petticoat to find you.

Muf. Pr'ythee, child, reproach me no more of human failings; they are but a little of the pitch and spots of the world that are still sticking on me; but I hope to scour 'em out in time: I am better at bottom than thou thinkest; I am not the man thou takest me for.

Muf. No, to my sorrow, Sir, you are not.

Muf. It was a very odd beginning tho' methought, to see thee come running in upon me with such a warm embrace:

‘ embrace : pr'ythee what was the meaning of that violent hot hug ?

‘ *Mor.* I am sure I meant nothing by it, but the zeal and affection which I bear to the man of the world whom I may love lawfully.

‘ *Muf.* But thou wilt not teach me at this age the nature of a close embrace ?

‘ *Mor.* No indeed : for my mother-in-law complains, you are past teaching : but if you mistook my innocent embrace for sin, I wish heartily it had been given where it should have been more acceptable.

‘ *Muf.* Why this is as it should be now : take the treasure again, it can never be put into better hands.

‘ *Mor.* Yes to my knowledge but it might. I have confessed my soul to you, if you can understand me rightly ; I never disobeyed you till this night ; and now since thro' the violence of my passion, I have been so unfortunate, I humbly beg your pardon, your blessing, and your leave, that upon the first opportunity I may go for ever from your sight ; for Heav'n knows, I never desire to see you more.

‘ *Muf.* [Wiping his eyes.] Thou makest me weep at thy unkindness ; indeed, dear daughter, we will not part.

‘ *Mor.* Indeed, dear daddy, but we will.’

Muf. Why, if I have been a little pilfering or so, I take it bitterly of thee to tell me of it, since it was to make thee rich ; and I hope a man may make bold with his own soul, without offence to his own child : here, take the jewels again, take 'em I charge thee upon thy obedience.

Mor. Well then, in virtue of obedience I will take 'em ; but on my soul, I had rather they were in a better hand...

Muf. Meaning mine, I know it.

Mor. Meaning his whom I love better than my life.

Muf. That's me again.

Mor. I would have you think so.

Muf. How thy good-nature works upon me ; 'well, I can do no less than venture damning for thee, and I may put fair for it, if the rabble be ordered to raise to-night.'

Enter Antonio in an African rich habit.

Ant. What do you mean, my dear, to stand talking in this suspicious place, just underneath Johayma's window? [To the Mufti.] You are well met, comrade, I know you are the friend of our flight; are the horses ready at the Postern Gate?

Muf. Antonio, and in disguise? Now I begin to smell a rat.

Ant. And I another, that out-stinks it; false Morayma, hast thou thus betrayed me to thy father?

Mor. Alas! I was betrayed myself: he came disguised like you, and I, poor innocent, ran into his hands!

Muf. In a good time you did so; 'I laid a trap for a bitch-fox, and a worse vermin has caught himself in 'it:' you would fain break loose now, though you left a limb behind you; but I am yet in my own territories and in call of company, that's my comfort.

Ant. [Taking him by the throat.] No; I have a trick left to put thee past thy squeaking: I have given thee the quinze; that ungracious tongue shall preach no more false doctrine.

Mor. What do you mean? You will not throttle him? Consider he's my father.

Ant. Pr'ythee let us provide first for our own safety: if I do not consider him, he will consider us with a vengeance afterwards.

' *Mor.* You may threaten him for crying out, but for ' my sake give him back a little cranny of his windpipe, ' and some part of speech.

' *Ant.* Not so much as one single interjection. Come ' away, father-in-law, this is no place for dialogues; ' when you are in the Mosque you talk by hours, and ' there no man must interrupt you; this is but like for ' like, good father-in-law; now I am in the pulpit, 'tis ' your turn to hold your tongue.' [He struggles.] ' Nay, ' if you will be hanging back, I shall take care you shall ' hang forward.'

[Pulls him along the stage with his sword at his reins.

Mor. T'other way to the arbour with him; and make haste before we are discovered.

' *Ant.* If I only bind and gag him there, he may commend me hereafter for civil usage; he deserves not so much favour by any action of his life.

' *Mor.*

‘ Mor. Yes, pray bate him one, for begetting your
‘ mistress.’

‘ Ant. ‘ I would, if he had not thought more of thy mo-
‘ ther than of thee: once more come along in silence,
my Pythagorean father-in-law.

Job. [At the balcony.]——A bird in a cage may
peep at least, tho’ she must not fly. What bustle’s there
beneath my window? Antonio, by all my hopes! I
know him by his habit; but what makes that woman
with him, and a friend, a sword drawn, and hastening
hence? This is no time for silence: who’s within call
there? where are the servants? Why, Omar, Abedin,
Hassan, and the rest, make haste and run into the garden;
there are thieves and villains; arm all the family, and
stop ‘em.

Ant. [Turning back.] O that screech owl at the win-
dow! we shall be pursued immediately; which way shall
we take?

Mor. [Giving him the casket.] ‘ Tis impossible to escape
them: for the way to our horses lies back again by the
house; and then we shall meet ‘em full in the teeth.
Here, take these jewels; thou mayest leap the walls and
get away.

Ant. And what will become of thee then, poor kind
foul?

Mor. I must take my fortune. ‘ When you have got
‘ safe into your own country, I hope you will bestow a
‘ sigh on the memory of her who loved you.

‘ Ant. It makes me mad, to think how many a good
‘ night will be lost betwixt us! Take back thy jewels;
‘ ‘tis an empty casket without thee; besides, I should
‘ never leap well with the weight of all thy father’s sins
‘ about me; thou and they had been a bargain.

‘ Mor. Pr’ythee take ‘em, ‘twill help me to be re-
‘ venged on him.

‘ Ant. No; they’ll serve to make thy peace with
‘ him.

Mor. I hear ‘em coming: shift for yourself at least;
remember I am yours for ever.

Servants crying, This way, this way, behind the scenes.

‘ Ant. And but the empty shadow of myself without
‘ thee! Farewel, father-in-law, that should have been,
‘ if

if I had not been cursed in my mother's belly—Now, which way, Fortune?"

[Runs amazedly backwards and forwards.]

Servants. [Within.] Follow, follow! yonder are the villains.

Ant. Oh, here's a gate open! but it leads into the castle; yet I must venture it. [Going out. A shout behind the scenes.] There's the rabble in a mutiny—What, is the devil up at midnight?—However, 'tis good herding in a crowd. [Runs out.]

[Mufti runs to Morayma, and lays hold on her, then snatches away the casket.]

Muf. Now, to do things in order, first I seize upon the bag, and then upon the baggage: for thou art but my flesh and blood; but these are my life and soul.

Mor. Then let me follow my flesh and blood, and keep to yourself your life and soul.

Muf. Both or none—Come away to durance.

Mor. Well, if it must be so, agreed; for I have another trick to play you, and thank yourself for what shall follow.

[Enter Servants.]

Job. [From above.] One of them took through the private way into the castle. Follow him, be sure: for these are yours already.

Mor. Help here, quickly! Omar, Abedin! I have hold on the villain that stole my jewels; but 'tis a lusty rogue, and he will prove too strong for me. What, help, I say! Do you not know your master's daughter?

Muf. Now, if I cry out, they will know my voice, and then I am disgraced for ever. Oh, thou art a venomous cockatrice!

Mor. Of your own begetting. [The Servants seize him.]

1 Serv. What a glorious deliverance have you had, Madam, from this bloody-minded Christian!

Mor. Give me back my jewels, and carry this notorious malefactor to be punish'd by my father. I'll hunt the other dry-foot.

[Takes the jewels, and runs out after Antonio at the same passage.]

1 Serv. I long to be handelling his hide, before we bring him to my master.

‘ 2 Serv. Hang him for an old covetous hypocrite, he deserves a worse punishment himself, for keeping us so hardly.

‘ 1 Serv. Ay, would he were in this villain’s place: thus would I lay him on, and thus. [Beats him.

‘ 2 Serv. And thus would I revenge myself of my last beating. [He beats him too, and then the rest.

‘ Muf. Oh, ho, ho!

‘ 1 Serv. Now, supposing you were the Mufti, Sir—

[Beats him again.

‘ Muf. The devil’s in that supposing rascal: I can bear no more; and I am the Mufti. Now, suppose yourselves my servants, and hold your hands: an anointed halter take you all.

‘ 1 Serv. My master! You will pardon the excess of our zeal for you, Sir: indeed we all took you for a villain; and so we used you.’

Muf. ‘ Ay, so I feel you did; my back and sides are abundant testimonies of your zeal.’ Run, rogues, and bring me back my jewels, and my fugitive daughter: run, I say.

‘ [They run to the gate, and the first Servant runs back again.

‘ 1 Serv. Sir, the castle is in a most terrible combustion; you may hear them hither.

‘ Muf. ’Tis a laudable commotion: the voice of the mobile is the voice of Heaven. I must retire a little, to strip me of the slave, and to assume the Mufti; and then I will return: for the piety of the people must be encouraged, that they may help me to recover my jewels and my daughter. [Exeunt Mufti and Servants.]

SCENE changes to the Castle-Yard,

And discovers Antonio, Mustapha, and the Rabble shouting. They come forward.

Ant. And so, at length, as I informed you, I escaped out of his covetous clutches; and now fly to your illustrious feet for my protection.

Muft. Thou shalt have it: and now defy the Mufti. ’Tis the first petition that has been made to me since my exaltation to tumult—‘ In this second night of the month Abib, and in the year of the Hegira—the lord knows what year: but ’tis no matter; for when I am settled,

the learned are always bound to find it out for me ; for
I am resolved to date my authority over the rabble
like other monarchs,

Ant. I have always had a longing to be yours again, tho' I could not compass it before : and had designed you a casket of my master's jewels too ; for I knew the custom, and would not have appeared before a great person, as you are, without a present ; but he has defrauded my good intentions, and basely robbed you of them. 'Tis a prize worth a million of crowns ; and you carry your letters of marque about you.'

Must. I shall make bold with his treasure, for the support of my new government. [*The people gather about him.*] What do these vile raggamuffins so near our person ? Your favour is offensive to us—Bear back, there, and make room for honest men to approach us. These fools and knaves are always impudently crowding next to princes, and keeping off the more deserving—Bear back, I say. [*They make a wider circle.*] That's dutifully done. Now, shout to shew your loyalty. [*A great shout.*] Hear'st thou that, slave Antonio ? These obstreperous villains shout, and know not for what they make a noise. You shall see me manage them, that you may judge what ignorant beasts they are. For whom do you shout now ? Who's to live and reign ? Tell me that, the wisest of you.

1 *Rabble.* Even who you please, Captain.

Must. La you there ! I told you so.

2 *Rabble.* We are not bound to know who is to live and reign ; our business is only to rise upon command, and plunder.

3 *Rabble.* Ay, the richest of both parties ; for they are our enemies.

Must. This last fellow is a little more sensible than the rest ; he has entered somewhat into the merits of the cause.

1 *Rabble.* If a poor man may speak his mind, I think, Captain, that yourself are the fittest to live and reign, I mean not over, but next, and immediately under the people : and thereupon I say, a Mustapha, a Mustapha !

All. A Mustapha, a Mustapha !

Must. I must confess the sound is pleasing, and tickles the ears of my ambition : but, alas, good people, it must

not be! I am contented to be a poor simple viceroy; but Prince Muley-Zeydan is to be the man—I shall take care to instruct him in the arts of government, and in his duty to us all; and therefore, mark my cry—A Muley-Zeydan, a Muley-Zeydan!

All. A Muley-Zeydan, a Muley-Zeydan!

Muf. You see, slave Antonio, what I might have been.

Ant. I observe your modesty.

Muf. But for a foolish promise I made once to my Lord Benducar, to set up any one he pleased.

Re-enter the Mufti, with his Servants.

Ant. Here's the old hypocrite again. Now, stand your ground, and bate him not an inch. Remember the jewels, the rich and glorious jewels; they are designed to be yours by virtue of prerogative.

Muf. Let me alone to pick a quarrel; I have an old grudge to him upon thy account.

Muf. [Making up to the Mobile.] Good people, here you are met together.

1 Rabble. Ay, we know that without your telling; but why are we met together, Doctor? For that's it which nobody here can tell.

2 Rabble. Why, to see one another in the dark, and to make holiday at midnight.

Muf. You are met, as becomes good Mussulmen, to settle the nation; for I must tell you, that tho' your tyrant is a lawful emperor, yet your lawful emperor is but a tyrant.

Ant. What stuff he talks!

Muf. 'This is excellent fine matter, indeed, slave Antonio.' He has a rare tongue. Oh, he would move a rock or elephant!

Ant. [Aside.] What a block have I to work upon! But still remember the jewels, Sir, the jewels. [To him.

Muf. Nay that's true on the other side; the jewels must be mine; but he has a pure fine way of talking; my conscience goes along with him; but the jewels have set my heart against him.

Muf. That your emperor is a tyrant, is most manifest; for you were born to be Turks, but he has played the Turk with you, and is taking your religion away.

2 Rabble.

2 *Rabble.* We find that in our decay of trade : I have seen, for these hundred years, that religion and trade always go together.'

Muf. He is now upon the point of marrying himself, without your sovereign consent ; and what are the effects of marriage ?

3 *Rabble.* A scolding domineering wife, if she prove honest ; and if a whore, a fine gaudy minx, that robs our counters every night, and then goes out, and spends it upon our cuckold-makers.

Muf. No, the natural effects of marriage are children. Now, on whom would he beget these children ? Even upon a Christian ! Oh, horrible ! how can you believe me, tho' I am ready to swear it upon the Alcoran ? Yes, true believers, you may believe, that he is going to beget a race of misbelievers.

Muf. That's fine, in earnest : I cannot forbear hearing to his enchanting tongue.

Ant. But yet remember—

Muf. Ay, ay, the jewels—Now again I hate him ; but yet my conscience makes me listen to him.'

Muf. Therefore, to conclude all, believers, pluck up your hearts, and pluck down the tyrant. ' Remember the courage of your ancestors ; remember the majesty of the people ; remember yourselves, your wives and children ; and lastly, above all, remember your religion, and our holy Mahomet ; all these require your timorous assistance ; shall I say, they beg it ? No, they claim it of you, by all the nearest and dearest ties of these three P's, self-preservation, our property, and our prophet. Now, answer me with an unanimous, cheerful cry, and follow me, who am your leader, to a glorious deliverance, [All cry, A Mufti, A Mufti ! and are following him off the stage.

Ant. Now you see what comes of your foolish qualms of conscience : the jewels are lost, and they are all leaving you.'

Muf. What, am I forsaken of my subjects ? Would the rogue purloin my liege people from me ? I charge you, in my own name, come back, ye deserters, and hear me speak.

1 *Rabble.* What, will he come with his balderdash, after the Mufti's eloquent oration?

2 *Rabble.* He's our Captain, lawfully picked up, and elected upon a stall; we will hear him.

Omnes. Speak, Captain; for we will hear you.

Muft. Do you remember the glorious rapines and robberies you have committed; your breaking open and gutting of houses, your rummaging of cellars, 'your demolishing of Christian temples, and bearing off in triumph the superstitious plate and pictures, the ornaments of their wicked altars, when all rich moveables were sentenced for idolatrous, and all that was idolatrous was seized? Answer first for your remembrance of all these sweetesses of mutiny; for upon those grounds I shall proceed.

Omnes. Yes, we do remember, we do remember.

Muft. Then make much of your retentive faculties. And who led you to those honey-combs? Your Mufti? No, believers, he only preached you up to it, but durst not lead you; he was but your counsellor, but I was your captain; he only loo'd you, but 'twas I that led you.

Omnes. That's true, that's true.

Ant. There you were with him for his figures.

Muft. I think I was, slave Antonio. Alas, I was ignorant of my own talent!—Say, then, believers, will you have a Captain for your Mufti, or a Mufti for your Captain? And further, to instruct you how to cry, will you have a Mufti, or no Mufti?

Omnes. No, Mufti, no Mufti.

Muft. That I laid in for them, slave Antonio—Do I then spit upon your faces? Do I discourage rebellion, mutiny, rapine, and plundering? You may think I do, believers; but, Heaven forbid! No, I encourage you to all these laudable undertakings; you shall plunder, you shall pull down the government; but you shall do this upon my authority, and not by his wicked instigation.

3 *Rabble.* Nay, when his turn is served, he may preach up loyalty again, and restitution, that he might have another snack among us.

1 *Rabble.* He may, indeed; for 'tis but his saying 'tis sin, and then we must restore; and therefore I would

would have a new religion, where half the commandments should be taken away, the rest mollified, and there should be little or no sin remaining.

Omnès. Another religion, a new religion, another religion.

‘ *Muſt.* And that may easily be done, with the help of a little inspiration: for I must tell you I have a pigeon at home, of Mahomet’s own breed; and when I have learned her to pick pease out of my ear, rest satisfied till then, and you shall have another. But now I think on’t, I am inspired already, that ’tis no sin to depose the Muſti.

‘ *Ant.* And good reason; for when kings and queens are to be discarded, what ſhould knaves do any longer in the pack?

‘ *Omnès.* He is deposed, he is deposed, he is deposed!

‘ *Muſt.* Nay, if he and his clergy will needs be preaching up rebellion, and giving us their blessing, ’tis but justice they ſhould have the first-fruits of it—Slave Antonio, take him into custody; and, doſt thou hear, boy? be ſure to ſecure the little tranſitory box of jewels—if he be obſtinate, put a civil question to him upon the rack, and he ſqueeks, I warrant him.

‘ *Ant.* [Seizing the Muſti.] Come, my quondam maſter; you and I muſt change qualities.

‘ *Muſt.* I hope you will not be ſo barbarous to torture me; we may preach ſuffering to others; but, alas, holy flesh is too well pampered to endure martyrdom!

Muſt. Now, late Muſti, not forgetting my first quarrel to you, we will enter ourelves with the plunder of your palace. ‘ ’Tis good to ſanctify a work, and begin a God’s name.

‘ *1 Rabble.* Our prophet let the devil alone with the laſt mob.

‘ *Mob.* But he takes care of this himſelf.’

As they are going out, enter Benducar leading Almeyda; be with a ſword in one hand; Benducar’s ſlave follows, with Muley-Moluch’s head upon a ſpear.

Muſt. ‘ Not ſo much haſte, masters; come back again. You are ſo bent upon miſchief, that you take a man upon the first word for plunder.’ Here’s a fight for you! the Emperor is come upon his head to viſit you.

[Bowing.]

[Boozing.] Most noble Emperor, now I hope you will not hit us in the teeth, that we have pulled you down ; for we can tell you to your face, that we have exalted you. [They all shout.]

Ben. [To Almeyda, apart.] Think what I am, and what yourself may be
In being mine : refuse not proffer'd love
That brings a crown.

Alm. [To him.] I have resolv'd ;
And these shall know my thoughts.

Ben. [To her.] On that I build—

[He comes up to the Rabble.]
Joy to the people for the tyrant's death !

- Oppression, rapine, banishment, and blood
- Are now no more ; but speechless as that tongue,
- That lies for evert still.
- How is my grief divided with my joy,
- When I must own I kill'd him ! Bid me speak ;
- For hot to bid me, is to disallow
- What for your sakes is done.'

Must. In the name of the people, we command you speak. But that pretty lady shall speak first ; for we have taken somewhat of a liking to her person. Be not afraid, lady, to speak to these rude raggamuffins : there's nothing shall offend you, unless it be their stink, an't please you.

[Making a leg.]

Alm. Why should I fear to speak, who am your queen ?
My peaceful father sway'd the sceptre long ;
And you enjoy'd the blessings of his reign,
While you deserv'd the name of Africans.
Then, not commanded, but commanding you,
Fearless I speak—Know me for what I am.

Ben. How she assumes ! I like not this beginning. [Aside.]

- Alm. I was not born so base to flatter crowds,
- And move your pity by a whining tale.
- Your tyrant would have forc'd me to his bed ;
- But in th' attempt of that foul brutal act,
- These loyal slaves secur'd me by his death.

[Pointing to Ben.]

- Ben. Makes she no more of me than of a slave ! [Aside.]
- Madam, I thought I had instructed you. [To Alm.]
- To

To frame a speech more suiting to the times :
The circumstances of that dire design,
Your own despair, my unexpected aid,
My life endanger'd by his bold defence,
And after all, his death, and your deliverance,
Were themes that ought not to be slighted o'er.

Must. She might have passed over all your petty
businesses, and no great matter—But the raising of my
rabble is an exploit of consequence, and not to be mum-
bled up in silence, for all her pertness.

Alm. When force invades the gift of nature, life,
The eldest law of nature, bids defend ;
And if, in that defence, a tyrant fall,
His death's his crime, not ours.
Suffices that he's dead ; all wrongs die with him ;
When he can wrong no more, I pardon him :
Thus I absolve myself, and him excuse.
Who sav'd my life and honour ; but praise neither.

Ben. 'Tis cheap to pardon whom you would not pay.
But what speak I of payment or reward ?
Ungrateful woman ! you are yet no queen ;
Nor more than a proud, haughty Christian slave :
As such I seize my right. [Going to lay hold of her.]

Alm. [Drawing a dagger.] Dare not to approach me.
Now, Africans,
He shows himself to you ; to me he stood
Confess'd before, and own'd his insolence
T' espouie my person, and assume the crown,
Claim'd in my right. For this he slew your tyrant
Oh, no, he only chang'd him for a worse ;
Embas'd your slavery by his own vileness,
And loaded you with more ignoble bonds.
Then think me not ungrateful, not to share
Th' imperial crown with a presuming traitor.
He says I am a Christian : true, I am ;
But yet no slave. If Christians can be thought
Unfit to govern those of other faith,
'Tis left for you to judge.

Ben. I have no patience ; she consumes the time
In idle talk, and owns her false belief.
Seize her by force, and bear her hence unheard.

Alm. [To the people.] 'No, let me rather die your sacrifice,
Than live his triumph.'

I throw myself into my people's arms :
As you are men, compassionate my wrongs,
And as good men, protect me.

' *Ant.* Something must be done to save her. — [Aside to Müst.] This is all addressed to you, Sir : she singled you out with her eye, as commander in chief of the mobility.

' *Müst.* Think'st thou so, slave Antonio ?

' *Ant.* Most certainly, Sir ; and you cannot in honour but protect her. Now, look to your hits, and make your fortune.

' *Müst.* Methought, indeed, she cast a kind leer towards me. Our prophet was but just such another scoundrel as I am, till he raised himself to power, and consequently to holiness, by marrying his master's widow. I am resolved I'll put forward for myself ; for why should I be my Lord Benducar's fool and slave, when I may be my own fool, and his master ?

Ben. Take her into possession, Mustapha.

Müst. That's better counsel than you meant it. Yes, I do take her into possession, and into protection too — What say you, masters, will you stand by me ?

Omnes. One and all, one and all !

' *Ben.* Hast thou betray'd me, traitor ? Mufti, speak, And mind them of religion. [Mufti *shakes his head.*]

' *Müst.* Alas, poor gentleman ! he has gotten a cold, with a sermon of two hours long, and a prayer of four ; and, besides, if he durst speak, mankind is grown wiser, at this time of day, than to cut one another's throats about religion. Our Mufti's is a green coat, and the Christian's is a black coat ; and we must wisely go together by the ears, whether green or black shall sweep our spoils.' [Drums within, and shouts.]

Ben. Now we shall see whose numbers will prevail : The conquering troops of Muley-Zeydan come, To crush rebellion, and espouse my cause.

Müst. We will have a fair trial of skill for it, I can tell him that. When we have dispatched with Muley-Zeydan, your Lordship shall march in equal proportions of

of your body, to the four gates of the city, and every tower shall have a quarter of you.

[Antonio draws them up, and takes Alm. by the hand. Shouts again, and drums.

Enter Dorax and Sebastian, attended by African Soldiers and Portugeses. Almeyda and Sebastian run into each other's Arms, and both speak together.

Seb. and Alm. My Sebastian ! My Almeyda ?

Alm. Do you then live ?

Seb. And live to love thee ever.

Ben. How ! Dorax and Sebastian still alive !

The Moors and Christians join'd ! I thank thee, prophet.

Dor. The citadel is ours ; and Muley-Zeydan
Safe under guard, but as becomes a prince.

Lay down your arms : such base plebeian blood
Would only stain the brightness of my sword,
And blunt it for some nobler work behind.

Muft. I suppose you may put it up without offence to
any man here present. For my part, I have been loyal to
my sovereign lady ; though that villain, Benducar, and
that hypocrite, the Mufti, would have corrupted me ;
but if those two 'scape public justice, then I, and all my
latest honest subjects here, deserve hanging.

Ben. [To Dor.] I'm sure I did my part to poison thee,
What saint soe'er has sodder'd thee again :
A dose less hot had burst through ribs of iron.

Muf. Not knowing that, I poison'd him once more,
And drench'd him with a draught so deadly cold,
That, had'st not thou prevented, had congeal'd
The channel of his blood, and froze him dry.

Ben. Thou interposing fool, to mangle mischief,
And think to mend the perfect work of hell.

Dor. Thus, when heav'n pleases, double poisons cure.
I will not tax thee of ingratitude
To me thy friend, who hast betray'd thy prince ;
Death he deserv'd indeed, but not from thee.
But Fate, it seems, reserv'd the worst of men
To end the worst of tyrants.
Go, bear him to his fate,
And send him to attend his master's ghost.

Let some secure my other poisoning friend,
Whose double diligence preserv'd my life.

‘ *Ant.* You are fallen into good hands, father-in-law ;
your sparkling jewels, and Morayma’s eyes may prove
a better bail than you deserve.

‘ *Muf.* The best that can come of me, in this condition, is to have my life begged first, and then to be begged for a fool afterwards.’

[*Exit Antonio with the Mufti, and at the same time Benducar is carried off.*]

‘ *Dor.* [To Must.] You and your hungry herd depart
For justice cannot stoop so low, to reach [untouch’d ;
The groveling sin of crouds ; but curst be they
Who trust revenge with such mad instruments,
Whose blindfold busness is but to destroy ;
And like the fire commission’d by the winds,
Begins on sheds, but rowling in a round,
On palaces returns. Away, ye skum,
That still rise upmost when the nation boils :
Ye mongrel work of heav’n, with human shapes,
Not to be damn’d or fav’d, but breathe and perish,
That have but just enough of sense, to know
The master’s voice when rated, to depart.

[*Exeunt Mustapha and rabble.*]

Alm. With gratitude as low, as knees can pay

[*Kneeling to him.*]

To those blest holy fires, our guardian angels,
Receive these thanks ; till altars can be rais’d.

Dor. Arise, fair excellence, and pay no thanks,

[*Raising her up.*]

Till time discover what I have deserv’d.

Seb. More than reward can answer,
If Portugal and Spain were join’d to Africa,
And the main ocean crusted into land,
If universal monarchy were mine,
Here should the gift be plac’d.

Dor. And from some hands I should refuse that gift :
Be not too prodigal of promises ;
But stint your bounty to one only grant,
Which I can ask with honour.

Seb. What I am

Is but thy gift, make what thou canst of me,
Secure of no repulse.

Dor. [To Seb.] Dismiss your train.

[To Alm.] You, Madam, please one moment to retire.

[Sebastian signs to the Portugueses to go off: Almeyda bowing to him, goes off also: the Africans follow her.

Dor. [To the Captain of the Guard.] With you one word in private. [Goes out with the Captain.]

Seb. [Solus.] Reserv'd behaviour, open nobleness,
A long mysterious track of stern bounty.
But now the hand of Fate is on the curtain,
And draws the scene to fight.

Re-enter Dorax, having taken off his turbant, and put on a peruke, hat, and cravat.

Dor. Now do you know me?

Seb. Thou shouldest be Alonzo.

Dor. So you should be Sebastian:
But when Sebastian ceas'd to be himself,
I ceas'd to be Alonzo.

Seb. As in a dream

I see thee here, and scarce believe mine eyes.

Dor. Is it so strange to find me where my wrongs,
And your inhuman tyranny have sent me?

‘ Think not you dream: or, if you did, my injuries
‘ Shall call so loud, that lethargy should wake;
‘ And death should give you back to answer me.
‘ A thousand nights have brush'd their balmy wings
‘ Over these eyes, but ever when they clos'd,
‘ Your tyrant image forc'd them ope again,
‘ And dry'd the dews they brought.

‘ The long-expected hour is come at length,
‘ By manly vengeance to redeem my fame:

‘ And that once clear'd, eternal sleep is welcome.

‘ *Seb.* I have not yet forgot I am a king;

‘ Whose royal office is redress of wrongs:

‘ If I have wrong'd thee, charge me face to face;

‘ I have not yet forgot I am a soldier.

‘ *Dor.* ‘Tis the first justice thou hast ever done me;

‘ Then though I loath this woman's war of tongues,

Yet shall my cause of vengeance first be clear;

And, Honour, be thou judge.

Seb. ‘ Honour befriend us both.’

Beware, I warn thee yet, to tell thy griefs
In terms becoming majesty to hear :

‘ I warn thee thus, because I know thy temper
‘ Is insolent and haughty to superiors :
‘ How often hast thou brav’d my peaceful court,
‘ Fill’d it with noisy brawls, and windy boasts ;
‘ And, with past service, nauseously repeated,
‘ Reproach’d ev’n me thy prince ?’

Dor. ‘ And well I might, when you forgot reward,
‘ The part of heav’n in kings : for punishment
‘ Is hangman’s work, and drudgery for devils.’
I must, and will reproach thee with my service,
Tyrant (it irks me so to call my prince)
But just resentment and hard usage coin’d
Th’ unwilling word ; and grating as it is,
Take it, for ’tis thy due.

Seb. How, tyrant !

Dor. Tyrant.

Seb. Traitor ; that name thou can’t not echo back :
That robe of infamy, that circumcision
I’ll hid beneath that robe, proclaim the traitor :
And, if a name
More foul than traitor be, ’tis renegade.

Dor. If I’m a traitor, think, and blush, thou tyrant,
Whose injuries betray’d me into treason,
Effac’d my loyalty, unhing’d my faith,
And hurry’d me from hopes of heaven to hell,
‘ All these, and all my yet unfinish’d crimes,
‘ When I shall rise to plead before the saints,
‘ I charge on thee, to make thy damning sure.’

Seb. Thy old presumptuous arrogance again,
That bred my first dislike, and then my loathing.
Once more be warn’d, and know me for thy king.

Dor. Too well I know thee, but for king no more :
This is not Lisbon, nor the circle this,
Where, like a statue, thou hast stood besieg’d
By sycophants, and fools, the growth of courts ;
Where thy gull’d eyes, in all the gaudy round,
Met nothing but a lie in every face ;
‘ And the gros flattery of a gaping crowd ;
‘ Envious who first should catch, and first applaud
‘ The stuff or royal nonsense : when I spoke,’

My honest homely words were carp'd, and censur'd,
 For want of courtly stile: related actions,
 Though modestly reported, pass'd for boasts:
 Secure of merit, if I ask'd reward,
 Thy hungry minions thought their rights invaded,
 ' And the bread snatch'd from pimps and parasites.'
 Henriquez answer'd, with a ready lie,
 To save his king's, the boon was begg'd before.

Seb. ' What say'st thou of Henriquez ?' Now by heav'n,
 Thou mov'st me more by barely naming him,
 Than all thy foul unmanner'd scurril taunts.

Dor. And therefore 'twas to gaul thee, that I nam'd
 That thing, that nothing, but a cringe and smile; [him,
 That woman, but more daub'd; or, if a man,
 Corrupted to a woman; thy man's mistress.

Seb. All false as hell or thou.

Dor. Yes; full as false.

As that I serv'd thee fifteen hard campaigns,
 And pitch'd thy standard in these foreign fields;
 By me thy greatness grew, thy years grew with it,
 But thy ingratitude outgrew them both.

Seb. I see to what thou tend'st, but tell me first,
 If those great acts were done alone for me;
 If love produc'd not some, and pride the rest ?

Dor. Why, love does all that's noble here below:
 But all th' advantage of that love was thine:
 For, coming fraughted back, in either hand
 With palm and olive, victory and peace,
 I was indeed prepar'd to ask my own,
 (For Violante's vows were mine before;)
 Thy malice had prevention, ere I spoke;
 And ask'd me Violante for Henriquez.

Seb. I meant thee a reward of greater worth.

Dor. Where justice wanted, could reward be hop'd?
 Could the robb'd passenger expect a bounty
 From those rapacious hands who stripp'd him first?

Seb. He had my promise, ere I knew thy love.

Dor. My services deserv'd thou should'st revoke it.

Seb. Thy insolence had cancell'd all thy service;
 To violate my laws, even in my court,
 Sacred to peace, and safe from all affronts;
 Ev'n to my face, and done in my despight,

Under the wing of awful majesty
To strike the man I lov'd !

Dor. Ev'n in the face of heav'n, a place more sacred,
Would I have struck the man, who, prompt by power,
Would seize my right, and rob me of my love :
But, for a blow provoked by thy injustice,
The hasty product of a just despair,
When he refus'd to meet me in the field,
That thou should'st make a coward's cause thy own ?

Seb. He durst : nay, more, desir'd and begg'd with tears,
To meet thy challenge fairly : 'twas thy fault
To make it public ; but my duty, then
To interpose, on pain of my displeasure,
Betwixt your swords.

Dor. On pain of infamy
He should have disobey'd.

Seb. Th' indignity thou didst was meant to me :
‘ Thy gloomy eyes were cast on me with scorn,
‘ As who should say, the blow was there intended ;’
But that thou did'st not dare to lift thy hands
Against anointed power : — so was I forc'd
To do a sovereign justice to myself,
And spurn thee from my presence.

Dor. Thou hast dar'd
To tell me, what I durst not tell myself :
I durst not think that I was spurn'd, and live ;
‘ And live to hear it boasted to my face.
‘ All my long avarice of honour lost,
‘ Heap'd up in youth, and hoarded up for age ;
‘ Has honour's fountain then suck'd back the stream ?
‘ He has ; and hooting boys may dry-shod pass,
‘ And gather pebbles from the naked ford.’
Give me my love, my honour ; give them back —
Give me revenge, while I have breath to ask it —

Seb. Now by this honour'd order which I wear,
More gladly would I give, than thou dar'st ask it —
‘ Nor shall the sacred character of king
‘ Be urg'd to shield me from thy bold appeal.
‘ If I have injur'd thee, that makes us equal :
‘ The wrong, if done, debas'd me down to thee.’
But thou hast charg'd me with ingratitude ;
Hast thou not charg'd me ? Speak.

Dor. Thou know'st I have :
If thou disown'st that imputation, draw,
And prove my charge a lie.

Seb. No ; to disprove that lie I must not draw ;
Be conscious to thy worth, and tell thy soul
What thou hast done this day in my defence :
To fight thee, after this, what were it else
Than owning that ingratitude thou urgest ?
That Isthmus stands between two rushing seas ;
Which mounting, view each other from afar ::
And strive in vain to meet.

Dor. I'll cut that Isthmus,
Thou know'st I meant not to preserve thy life,
But to reprieve it, for my own revenge.
‘ I sav'd thee out of honourable malice :’
Now draw ; I should be loth to think thou dar'st not :
Beware of such another vile excuse.

Seb. Oh, patience, heav'n ?

Dor. Beware of patience too ;
That's a suspicious word : ‘ it had been proper,
Before thy foot had spurn'd me ; now 'tis base :
‘ Yet to disarm thee of thy last defence,’
I have thy oath for my security :
The only boon I begg'd was this fair combat :
Fight or be perjur'd now ; that's all thy choice..

Seb. Now can I thank thee as thou would'it be thank'd :

[*Drawing.*]

Never was vow of honour better paid,
If my true sword but hold, than this shall be.
‘ The sprightly bridegroom on his wedding night,
‘ More gladly enters not the lists of love.
‘ Why 'tis enjoyment to be summon'd thus.’
Go ; bear my message to Henriquez' ghost ;
And say his master and his friend reveng'd him..

Dor. His ghost ! then is my hated rival dead ?

Seb. The question is beside our present purpose ;
Thou seeest me ready ; we delay too long.

Dor. A minute is not much in either's life,
When there's but one betwixt us ; ‘ throw it in,
‘ And give it him of us who is to fall.

‘ *Seb.* He's dead : make haste, and thou may'st yet
o'ertake him.

‘ Dor. When I was hasty, thou delay’dst me longer.
 ‘ I pr’ythee let me hedge one moment more
 ‘ Into thy promise :’ for thy life preserv’d,
 Be kind ; and tell me how that rival dy’d,
 Whose death next thine I wish’d.

Seb. ‘ If it would please thee, thou should’st never
 ‘ But thou, like jealousy, enquir’st a truth, [know :
 ‘ Which found will torture thee : he dy’d in fight :
 Fought next my person ; as in consort fought :
 Kept pace for pace, and blow for every blow ;
 Save when he heav’d his shield in my defence ;
 And on his naked side receiv’d my wound :
 Then when he could no more, he fell at once,
 But rowl’d his falling body crost their way ;
 And made a bulwark of it for his prince.

Dor. I never can forgive him such a death !

Seb. I prophesy’d thy proud soul could not bear it.
 Now judge thyself, who best deserv’d my love.
 I knew you both ; and (durst I say) as heav’n
 Foreknew among the shining angel host
 Who should stand firm, who fall.

Dor. Had he been tempted so, so had he fall’n ;
 And so, had I been favour’d, had I stood.

Seb. What had been, is unknown ; what is, appears ;
 Confess he justly was preferr’d to thee.

Dor. Had I been born with his indulgent stars,
 My fortune had been his, and his been mine,
 Oh, worse than hell ! what glory have I lost,
 And what has he acquir’d by such a death !
 I should have fallen by Sebastian’s side,
 My corps had been the bulwark of my king,
 His glorious end was a patch’d work of Fate,
 Ill sorted with a soft effeminate life :
 It suited better with my life than his
 So to have dy’d : mine had been of a piece,
 Spent in your service dying at your feet.

Seb. The more effeminate and soft his life,
 The more his fame, to struggle to the field,
 And meet his glorious fate : confess, proud spirit,
 (For I will have it from thy very mouth)
 That better he deserv’d my love than thou.

Dor. Oh, whither would you drive me ! I must grant,

Yes, I must grant, but with a swelling soul,
 Henriquez had your love with more desert :
 For you he fought and dy'd ; I fought against you ;
 Through all the mazes of the bloody field,
 Hunted your sacred life ; which that I miss'd
 Was the propitious error of my fate,
 Not of my soul ; my soul's a regicide.

Seb. Thou might'st have given it a more gentle name :
 Thou meant'st to kill a tyrant, not a king. [More calmly.
 Speak, did'st thou not, Alonzo ?

Dor. Can I speak !

Alas, I cannot answer to Alonzo :
 No, Dorax cannot answer to Alonzo :
 Alonzo was too kind a name for me.

• Then, when I fought and conquer'd with your arms,
 • In that blest age I was the man you nam'd :
 • Till rage and pride debas'd me into Dorax ;
 • And lost, like Lucifer, my name above.'

Seb. Yet twice this day I ow'd my life to Dorax.

Dor. I sav'd you but to kill you : there's my grief.

Seb. Nay, if thou canst be griev'd, thou canst repent :
 Thou couldst not be a villain, though thou wouldst :
 Thou own'st too much in owning thou hast err'd ;
 And I too little, who provok'd thy crime.

Dor. Oh, stop this headlong torrent of your goodness :
 It comes too fast upon a feeble soul,
 Half drown'd in tears before ; spare my confusion :
 For pity spare, and say not, first you err'd.
 For yet I have not dar'd, through guilt and shame,
 To throw myself beneath your royal feet.

[Falls at his feet.]

Now spurn this rebel, this proud renegade :
 'Tis just you should, nor will I more complain.

Seb. Indeed thou shouldest not ask forgiveness first,
 But thou prevent'st me still, in all that's noble.

[Taking him up.]

Yes, I will raise thee up with better news :
 Thy Violante's heart was ever thine ;
 Compell'd to wed, because she was my ward,
 Her soul was absent when she gave her hand :
 Nor could my threats, or his pursuing courtship,
 Effect the consummation of his love ;

So,

So, still indulging tears, she pines for thee,
A widow and a maid.

Dor. Have I been cursing Heav'n, while Heaven blest
' I shall run mad with extasy of joy : ' me !
What, in one moment, to be reconcil'd
To Heav'n, and to my king, and to my love !
But pity is my friend, and stops me short,
For my unhappy rival. Poor Henriquez !

Seb. Art thou so generous too, to pity him ?
Nay, then I was unjust to love him better.
Here let me ever hold thee in my arms ; [Embracing him.
And all our quarrels be but such as these,
Who shall love best, and closest shall embrace :
Be what Henriquez was : be my Alonzo.

Dor. What, my Alonzo, said you ? My Alonzo !
Let my tears thank you ; for I cannot speak ;
' And if I could,

' Words were not made to vent such thoughts as mine.'

Seb. ' Thou can'st not speak, and I can ne'er be silent.'
Some strange reverse of Fate must sure attend
This vast profusion, this extravagance
Of Heav'n to blefs me thus. ' Tis gold so pure,
It cannot bear the stamp, without allay.
Be kind, ye pow'rs, and take but half away :
With ease the gifts of fortune I resign ;
But, let my love, and friend, be ever mine. [Exeunt.

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

• *The SCENE is a Room of State.*

• *Enter Dorax and Antonio.*

• *DORAX.*

• JOY is on every face, without a cloud :
• As, in the scene of opening Paradise,
• The whole creation danc'd at their new being ;
• Pleas'd to be what they were ; pleas'd with each other.
• Such joy have I, both in myself, and friends ;
• And double joy that I have made them happy.

• *Ant.*

‘ *Ant.* Pleasure has been the business of my life ;
 ‘ And every change of fortune easy to me,
 ‘ Because I still was easy to myself.
 ‘ The loss of her I lov’d wou’d touch me nearest ;
 ‘ Yet, if I found her, I might love too much,
 ‘ And that’s uneasy pleasure.

‘ *Dor.* If she be fated
 ‘ To be your wife, your fate will find her for you :
 ‘ Predestinated ills are never lost.

‘ *Ant.* I had forgot
 ‘ T’ enquire before, but long to be inform’d ;
 ‘ How, poison’d and betray’d, and round beset,
 ‘ You could unwind yourself from all these dangers ;
 ‘ And move so speedily to our relief !

‘ *Dor.* The double poisons, after a short combat,
 ‘ Expell’d each other in their civil war,
 ‘ By nature’s benefit ; and rous’d my thought
 ‘ To guard that life which now I found attack’d.
 ‘ I summon’d all my officers in haste,
 ‘ On whose experienc’d faith I might rely :
 ‘ All came resolv’d to die in my defence,
 ‘ Save that one villain who betray’d the gate.
 ‘ Our diligence prevented the surprize

‘ We justly fear’d : So Muley-Zeydan found us
 ‘ Drawn up in battle, to receive the charge,

‘ *Ant.* But how the Moors and Christian slaves were
 ‘ You have not yet unfolded. [join’d,

‘ *Dor.* That remains.

‘ We knew their interest was the same with ours :
 ‘ And though I hated more than death, Sebastian ;
 ‘ I could not see him die by vulgar hands ;
 ‘ But prompted by my angel, or by his,
 ‘ Freed all the slaves, and plac’d him next myself,
 ‘ Because I would not have his person known.
 ‘ I need not tell the rest, th’ event declares it.

‘ *Ant.* Your conquests came of course ; their men
 ‘ were raw,

‘ And yours were disciplin’d : one doubt remains,
 ‘ Why you industriously conceal’d the king,
 ‘ Who, known, had added courage to his men ?

‘ *Dor.* I would not hazard civil broils betwixt
 ‘ His friends and mine ; which might prevent our combat.
 ‘ Yet, had he fall’n, I had dismiss’d his troops ;

‘ *Or,*

- ‘ Or, if victorious, order’d his escape.
- ‘ But I forgot a new increase of Joy,
- ‘ To feast him with surprize ; I must about it :
- ‘ Expect my swift return. [Exit Dorax.]

Enter a Servant to Antonio.

Ser. Here’s a lady at the door, that bids me tell you, she is come to make an end of the game, that was broken off betwixt you.

Ant. What manner of woman is she ? Does she not want two of the four elements ? Has she any thing about her but air and fire ?

‘ *Ser.* Truly, she flies about the room, as if she had wings instead of legs ; I believe she’s just turning into a bird : a house-bird, I warrant her : and so hasty to fly to you, that rather than fail of entrance, she would come tumbling down the chimney, like a swallow.’

Enter Morayma.

Ant. [Running to her, and embracing her.] Look if she be not here already ! What, no denial, it seems, will serve your turn ? Why, thou little dun, is thy debt so pressing ?

Mor. Little devil, if you please : your lease is out, good Mr. Conjurer ; and I am come to fetch your soul and body ; not an hour of leudness longer in this world for you.

Ant. Where the devil hast thou been ? and how the devil didst thou find me here ?

Mor. I followed you into the castle-yard : but there was nothing but tumult and confusion ; and I was bodily afraid of being picked up by some of the rabble : considering I had a double charge about me — my jewels, and my maiden-head.

‘ *Ant.* Both of them intended for my worship’s sole use and property.

‘ *Mor.* And what was poor little I among them all ?

‘ *Ant.* Not a mouthful a-piece : ‘twas too much odds in conscience.

‘ *Mor.* So seeking for shelter, I naturally ran to the old place of assignation, the garden-house ; where, for want of instinct, you did not follow me.’

Ant. Well, for thy comfort, I have secured thy father ; and, I hope, thou hast secured his effects for us.

‘ *Mor.*

‘ *Mor.* Yes, truly, I had the prudent foresight to consider, that when we grow old, and weary of solacing one another, we might have, at least, wherewithal to make merry with the world ; and take up with a worse pleasure of eating and drinking; when we were disabled for a better.

‘ *Ant.* Thy fortune will be even too good for thee : for thou art going into the country of serenades and gallantries ; where thy street will be haunted every night with thy foolish lovers, and my rivals ; who will be sighing, and singing under thy inexorable windows, lamentable ditties, and call thee cruel, and godless, and moon, and stars, and all the poetical names of wicked rhyme. While thou and I are minding our busines, and jogging on, and laughing at them, at leisure minutes ; which will be very few, take that by way of threatening.

‘ *Mor.* I am afraid you are not very valiant, that you huff so much beforehand. But they say, your churches are fine places for love-devotion : many a she saint is there worshipped.

‘ *Ant.* Temples are there as they are in all other countries, good conveniences for dumb interviews : I hear the Protestants are not much reformed in that point neither ; for their sectaries call their churches by the natural name of meeting-houses. Therefore I warn thee in good time, not more of devotion than needs must, good future spouse ; and always in a veil ; for those eyes of thine are damned enemies to mortification.

‘ *Mor.* The best thing I have heard of Christendom, is, that we women are allowed the privilege of having souls ; and I assure you, I shall make bold to bestow mine upon some lover, whenever you begin to go astray ; ‘ and if I find no convenience in a church, a private chamber will serve the turn.’

‘ *Ant.* When that day comes, I must take my revenge, and turn gardener again : for, I find, I am much given to planting.

‘ *Mor.* But take heed in the mean time, that some young Antonio does not spring up in your own family ; as false as his father, though of another man’s planting.

Re-enter Dorax with Sebastian and Almeyda. Sebastian enters speaking to Dorax, while in the mean time Antonio presents Morayma to Almeyda.

Seb. How fares our royal pris'ner, Muley-Zeydan ?

Dor. Dispos'd to grant whatever I desire,
To gain a crown, and freedom : ' well I know him,
' Of easy temper, naturally good,
' And faithful to his word.'

Seb. Yet one thing wants,
To fill the measure of my happiness ;
I'm still in pain for poor Alvarez' life.

Dor. Release that fear, the good old man is safe ;
I paid his ransom ;
And have already order'd his attendance.

Seb. Oh, bid him enter, for I long to see him.

Enter Alvarez with a Servant, who departs when Alvarez is entered.

Alv. Now by my soul, and by these hoary hairs,
[Falling down, and embracing the King's knees.]
I'm so o'er-whelm'd with pleasure, that I feel
A latter spring within my with'ring limbs,
That shoots me out again.

Seb. Thou good old man ! [Raising him.]
Thou hast deceiv'd me into more, more joys ;
Who stood brim-full before.

Alv. Oh, my dear child !
I love thee so, I cannot call thee king,
Whom I so oft have dandled in these arms !
What, when I gave thee lost, to find thee living !
'Tis like a father who himself had scap'd
A falling house, and after anxious search,
Hears from afar, his only son within ;
And digs through rubbish, till he drags him out.
To see the friendly light.
Such is my haste, so trembling is my joy,
To draw thee forth from underneath thy fate.'

Seb. The tempest is o'er-blown ; the skies are clear,
And the sea charm'd into a calm so still,
That not a wrinkle ruffles her smooth face.

Alv. Just such she shows before a rising storm :
And therefore am I come with timely speed,
To warn you into port.

Alm. My soul forbodes
Some dire event involv'd in those dark words ;
And just disclosing in a birth of fate.

[Aside.]

Alv. Is there not yet an heir of this vast empire,
Who still survives, of Muley-Moluch's branch ?

Dor. Yes, such a one there is, a captive here,
And brother to the dead.

Alv. The Pow'rs above,
Be prais'd for that : my prayers for my good master
I hope are heard.

Seb. 'Thou hast a right in heav'n ;'
And why these prayers for me ?

Alv. A door is open yet for your deliverance.
Now you, my countrymen, and you, Almeyda,
Now all of us, and you (my all in one)
May yet be happy in that captive's life.

Seb. We have him here an honourable hostage
For terms of peace : what more he can contribute
To make me blest, I know not.

Alv. Vastly more :
Almeyda may be settled in the throne ;
And you review your native clime with fame :
A firm alliance, and eternal peace,
(The glorious crown of honourable war)
Are all included in that prince's life :
Let this fair queen be given to Muley-Zeydan :
And make her love the sanction of your league.

Seb. No more of that ; his life's in my dispose ;
And pris'ners are not to insist on terms,
Or if they were, yet he demands not these.

Alv. You should exact them.

Alm. Better may be made ;
These cannot ; I abhor the tyrant's race ;
My parents' murderers, my throne's usurpers.
But, at one blow, to cut off all dispute,
Know this, thou busy, old, officious man,
I am a Christian. Now be wise no more ;
Or if thou wouldest be still thought wise, be silent.

Alv. Oh, I perceive you think your int'rest touch'd :
'Tis what before the battle I observ'd :
But I must speak, and will.

Seb.

Seb. I pr'ythee peace :

Perhaps she thinks they are too near of blood.

Alv. I wish she may not wed to blood more near.

Seb. What if I make her mine ?

Alv. Now Heav'n forbid !

• *Seb.* Wish rather Heav'n may grant.

• For, if I could deserve, I have deserv'd her :

• My toils, my hazards, and my subjects lives,

• (Provided she consent) may claim her love ;

• And, that once granted, I appeal to these,

• If better I could chuse a beauteous bride.

• *Ant.* The fairest of her sex.

• *Mor.* The pride of nature.

• *Dor.* He only merits her; she only him.

• So pair'd, so suited in their minds and persons,

• That they were fram'd the tallies for each other.

• If any alien love had interpos'd,

It must have been an eye-sore to beholders,

And to themselves a curse.

Alv. And to themselves

The greatest curse that can be, were to join.

Seb. Did not I love thee, past a change to hate,

That word had been thy ruin ; but no more,

I charge thee, on thy life, perverse old man.

Alv. Know, Sir, I would be silent if I durst ;

But, if on shipboard, I should see my friend

Grown frantic in a raging calenture,

And he, imagining vain flow'ry fields,

Would headlong plunge himself into the deep ;

Should I not hold him from that mad attempt,

Till his sick fancy were by reason cur'd ?

Seb. I pardon thee th' effects of doting age ;

Vain doubts, and idle cares, and over-caution ;

The second non-age of a soul, more wise ;

But now decay'd, and sunk into the socket,

Peeping by fits, and giving feeble light.

Alv. Have you forgot ?

Seb. Thou mean'st my father's will,

In bar of marriage to Almeyda's bed :

• Thou feest my faculties are still entire,

• Though thine are much impair'd. I weigh'd that will,

• And found 'twas grounded on our diff'rent faiths ;

• But,

• But, had he liv'd to see her happy change,
 • He would have cancell'd that hath interdict,
 • And join'd our hands himself.

• *Alv.* Still had he liv'd and seen this change,
 • He still had been the same.

• *Seb.* I have a dark remembrance of my father ;
 • His reas'nings and his actions both were just ;
 • And, granting that, he must have chang'd his measures.

• *Alv.* Yes, he was just, and therefore could not change.

• *Seb.* 'Tis a base wrong thou offer'st to the dead.

• *Alv.* Now Heav'n forbid,
 • That I should blast his pious memory :
 • No, I am tender of his holy fame :
 • For dying he bequeath'd it to my charge.
 • Believe, I am ; and seek to know no more,
 • But pay a blind obedience to his will.
 • For to preserve his fame I would be silent.

• *Seb.* Craz'd fool, who would'st be though an oracle,
 • Come down from off the tripos, and speak plain :
 • My father shall be justify'd, he shall :
 • 'Tis a son's part to rise in his defence ;
 • And to confound thy malice, or thy dotage.

• *Alv.* It does not grieve me that you hold me craz'd :
 • But, to be clear'd at my dead master's cost,
 • Oh, there's the wound ! but let me first adjure you,
I do ; and

By all you owe that dear departed soul,
 No more to think of marriage with Almeyda.

Seb. Not heav'n and earth combin'd can hinder it.

• *Alv.* Then witness heav'n and earth, how loth I am
 To say, you must not, nay you cannot wed.
 And since not only a dead father's fame,
 But more, a lady's honour must be touch'd,
 Which nice as ermines will not bear a soil ;
 Let all retire : that you alone may hear
 What ev'n in whispers I would tell you ear.

[All are going out.]

• *Alm.* Not one of you depart ; I charge you stay.
 • And were my voice a trumpet loud as fame,
 • To reach the round of heav'n, and earth, and sea,
 • All nations should be summon'd to this place.

• So little do I fear that fellow's charge :
 • So should my honour, like a rising swan,
 • Brush with her wings the falling drops away,
 • And proudly plough the waves.
 • *Seb.* This noble pride becomes thy innocence :
 • And I dare trust my father's memory,
 • To stand the charge of that foul forging tongue.'

Alv. ' It will soon be discover'd if I forge.'

Have you not heard your father in his youth,
 When newly marry'd, travell'd into Spain,
 And made a long abode in Philip's court ?

Seb. Why so remote a question ? ' which thyself
 • Can answ're to thyself, for thou wert with him,
 • His fav'rite, as I oft have heard thee boast,
 • And nearest to his soul.

Alv. ' Too near indeed ; forgive me, gracious Heav'n,
 • That ever I should boast I was so near :
 • The confident of all his young amours.'
 And have not you, unhappy beauty, heard, [To Alm.
 I have you not often heard, your exil'd parents
 Were refug'd in that court, and at that time ?

Alm. ' Tis true : and often since, my mother own'd
 How kind that prince was, to espouse her cause ;
 She counsell'd, nay, enjoin'd me on her blessing,
 To seek the sanctuary of your court :
 Which gave me first encouragement to come,
 And with my brother, beg Sebastian's aid.

Seb. Thou help'st me well, to justify my war.
 • [To Alm.] My dying father swore me, then a boy,
 • And made me kiss the cross upon his sword,
 • Never to sheath it, till that exil'd queen
 • Were by my arms restor'd.'

Alv. And can you find
 No mystry couch'd in this excess of kindness ?
 • Were kings e'er known, in this degenerate age,
 • So passionately fond of noble acts,
 • Where interest shar'd not more than half with honour ?
 • *Seb.* Base groveling soul, who know'st not honour's
 • But weigh'st it out in mercenary scales ; [worth,
 • The secret pleasure of a generous act,
 • Is the great mind's great bribe.

• *Alv.*

- *Alv.* Shew me that king, and I'll believe the phoenix.
- But knock at your own breast, and ask your soul,
- If those fair fatal eyes edg'd not your sword,
- More than your father's charge, and all your vows ?
- If so, and so your silence grants it is,
- Know, King, your father had, like you, a soul ;
- And love is your inheritance from him.
- Almeyda's mother too had eyes, like her,
- And not less charming ; and were charm'd no less
- Than yours are now with her, and hers with you.
- *Alm.* Thou ly'st, impostor ; perjur'd fiend, thou ly'st.
- *Seb.* Was't not enough to brand my father's fame,
- But thou must load a lady's memory ?
- O infamous, O base, beyond repair !
- And to what end this ill-concerted lie,
- Which palpable and gross, yet granted true,
- It bars not my inviolable vows ?

Alv. Take heed, and double not your father's crimes ;
To his adultry do not add your incest.
Know, she's the product of unlawful love,
And 'tis your carnal sister you would wed.

Seb. Thou shalt not say thou wert condemn'd unheard ;
Else, by my soul, this moment were thy last.

- *Alm.* But think not oaths shall justify thy charge ;
- Nor imprecations on thy cursed head.
- For who dares lie to Heav'n, thinks Heaven a jest.
- Thou hast confess'd thyself the conscious pandar
- Of that pretended passion ;
- A single witness, infamously known,
- Against two persons of unquestion'd fame.

Alv. What interest can I have, or what delight
To blaze their shame, or to divulge my own ?

- If prov'd, you hate me ; if unprov'd condemn'd,
- Not racks or tortures could have forc'd this secret,
- But too much care to save you from a crime,
- Which would have sunk you both ? for let me say,
- Almeyda's beauty well deserves your love.

Alm. Out, base impostor ! I abhor thy praise.

Dor. It looks not like impostor ; but a truth,
On utmost need reveal'd.

Seb. Did I expect from Dorax this return ?
Is this the love renew'd ?

Dor. Sir, I am silent ;
Pray Heaven my fears prove false.

Seb. Away ; you all combine to make me wretched.

Alv. But hear the story of that fatal love ;
Where every circumstance shall prove another ;
And Truth so shine by her own native light,
That if a lie were mixt, it must be seen.

Seb. No ; all may still be forg'd and of a piece.
No ; I can credit nothing thou canst say.

Alv. One proof remains ; and that's your father's hand :
Firm'd with his signet ; both so fully known,
That plainer evidence can hardly be,
Unless his soul would want her heav'n a while,
And come on earth to swear.

Seb. Produce that writing.

Alv. [To *Dor.*] Alonzo has it in his custody.
The faire, which when his nobleness redeem'd me,
And in a friendly visit own'd himself
For what he is, I then deposited ;
And had his faith to give it to the King.

Dor. Untouch'd, and seal'd, as when intrusted with me.

[Giving a sealed paper to *Seb.*
Such I restore it with a trembling hand,
Lest ought within disturb your peace of soul.

Seb. Draw near, Almeyda ; thou art most concern'd :

[Tearing open the seals.

For I am most in thee.

Alonzo, mark the characters :

Thou know'st my father's hand, observe it well :

And if th' impostor's pen have made one slip,
That shews it counterfeit, mark that and save me.

Dor. It looks indeed too like my master's hand :
So does the signet : more I cannot say ;
But wish 'twere not so like.

Seb. Methinks it owns

The black adul'try, and Almeyda's birth :
But such a mist of grief comes o'er my eyes,
I cannot, or I would not read it plain.

Alm. Heav'n cannot be more true, than this is false.

Seb. O couldst thou prove it with the same assurance !
Speak, hast thou ever seen thy father's hand ?

Alm. No ; but my mother's honour has been read
By me, and by the world, in all her acts,

In characters more plain and legible
 Than this dumb evidence, this blotted lie.
 Oh ! that I were a man, as my soul's one,
 To prove thee traitor and assassinate
 Of her fame : thus mov'd I'd tear thee, thus : —

[Tearing the paper.]
 And scatter o'er the field thy coward limbs,
 Like this foul off-spring of thy forging brain.

[Scattering the paper.]
Alv. Just so shalt thou be torn from all thy hopes.
 For know, proud woman, know in thy despite,
 The most authentic proof is yet behind ;
 Thou wear'st it on thy finger ; 'tis that ring,
 Which match'd to that on his, shall clear the doubt.
 'Tis no dumb forgery : for that shall speak ;
 And found a rattling peal to either's conscience.

Seb. This ring indeed, my father, with a cold
 And shaking hand, just in the pangs of death,
 Put on my finger ; with a parting sigh,
 And would have spoke ; but falter'd in his speech
 With undistinguish'd found.

Alv. I know it well ;
 For I was present. Now, Almeyda, speak :
 And truly tell us, how you came by yours.

Alm. My mother, when I parted from her sight
 To go to Portugal, bequeath'd it to me,
 Prefaging she should never see me more :
 She pull'd it from her finger, shed some tears,
 Kiss'd it, and told me 'twas a pledge of love,
 And hid a mystery of great importance
 Relating to my fortunes.

Alv. Mark me now,
 While I disclose that fatal mystery.
 Those rings, when you were born and thought another's,
 Your parent glowing yet in sinful love,
 Bid me bespeak : a curious artist wrought 'em,
 With joints so close, as not to be perceiv'd ;
 Yet are they both each other's counterpart :
 Her part had Juan inscrib'd, and his had Zayda,
 (You know those names are theirs) and in the midst,
 A heart divided in two halves was plac'd.
 Now if the rivets of those rings inclos'd,

Fit not each other, I have forg'd this lie :
But if they join, you must for ever part.

[Sebastian pulling off his ring ; Almeyda does the same, and gives it to Alvarez, who unscrues both the rings, and fits one half on the other. — Scb. Now life or death.

Alm. And either thine or ours.

I'm lost for ever. —

[Swoons.]

[The women and Morayma take her up, and carry her off. — [Sebastian here stands amazed without motion, his eyes fixed upwards.]

Seb. Look to the queen my wife ; for I am past All pow'r of aid to her or to myself.

Alv. His wife, said he, his wife ! O fatal found ! For, had I known it, this unwelcome news Had never reach'd their ears. So they had still been blest in ignorance, And I alone unhappy.

Dor. I knew it but too late, and durst not speak.

Seb. [Starting out of his amazement.] I will not live ; no not a moment more ; I will not add one moment more to incest ; I'll cut it off, and end a wretched being, For, should I live, my soul's so little mine, And so much hers, that I should still enjoy. Ye cruel powers, Take me as you have made me, miserable ; You cannot make me guilty ; 'twas my fate, And you made that, not I. — [Draws his sword.] [Ant. and Alv. lay hold on him, and Dorax wrests the sword out of his hand.]

Ant. For Heav'n's sake hold, and recollect your mind.

Alv. Consider whom you punish, and for what ; Yourself unjustly : you have charg'd the fault On Heav'n, that best may bear it. Tho' incest is indeed a deadly crime, You are not guilty, since unknown 'twas done, And known, had been abhorrd.

Seb. By Heav'n you're traitors all that hold my If death be but cessation of our thought, [hands.] Then let me die, for I would think no more. I'll boast my innocence above :

And

‘ And let ‘em see a soul they could not sully :
 ‘ I shall be there before my father’s ghost ;
 ‘ That yet may languish long in frosts and fires,
 ‘ For making me unhappy by his crime.

‘ [Struggling again.]

‘ Stand off, and let me ake my fill of death :
 ‘ For I can hold my breath in you despite,
 ‘ And swell my heaving soul out when I please.

‘ *Alv.* Heav’n comfort you !

‘ *Seb.* What, art thou giving comfort !

‘ Wouldst thou give comfort, who hast giv’n despair ?
 ‘ Thou seest Alonzo silent ; he’s a man.

‘ He knows, that men abandon’d of their hopes,
 ‘ Should ask no leave, nor stay for suing out
 ‘ A tedious writ of ease from ling’ring Heav’n ;
 ‘ But help themselves, as timely as they could,
 ‘ And teach the Fates their duty.

‘ *Dor.* [To *Alv.* and *Ant.*] Let him go.

‘ He is our king ; and he shall be obey’d.

‘ *Alv.* What, to destroy himself ? O patricide !

‘ *Dor.* Be not injurious in your foolish zeal,
 ‘ But leave him free ; or, by my sword I swear,
 ‘ To hew that arm away, that stops the passage
 ‘ To his eternal rest.

‘ *Ant.* [Letting go his hold.] Let him be guilty of his
 ‘ own death if he pleases ; for I’ll not be guilty of mine
 ‘ by holding him. [Seb. shakes off *Alv.*]

‘ *Alv.* [To *Dor.*] Infernal fiend,

‘ Is this a subject’s part ?

‘ *Dor.* ’Tis a friend’s office.

‘ He has convinc’d me that he ought to die ;

‘ And rather than he should not, here’s my sword

‘ To help him on his journey.

‘ *Seb.* My last, my only friend, how kind art thou,

‘ And how inhuman these !

‘ *Dor.* To make the trifle death a thing of moment !

‘ *Seb.* And not to weigh th’ important cause I had

‘ To rid myself of life !

‘ *Dor.* True ; for a crime

‘ So horrid in the face of men and angels,

‘ As wilful incest is !

‘ *Seb.* Not wilful neither.

‘ *Dor.*

‘ Dor. Yes, if you liv’d, and with repeated acts
 Refresh’d your sin, and loaded crimes with crimes,
 To swell your scores of guilt.
 ‘ Seb. True ; if I liv’d.
 ‘ Dor. I said so, if you liv’d.
 ‘ Seb. For hitherto was fatal ignorance,
 And no intended crime.
 ‘ Dor. That you best know :
 But the malicious world will judge the worst.
 ‘ Alv. Oh, what a sophister has hell procur’d,
 To argue for damnation !
 ‘ Dor. Peace, old dotard !
 Mankind, that always judge of kings with malice,
 Will think he knew this incest, and purſu’d it.
 His only way to rectify mistakes,
 And to redeem her honour, is to die.
 ‘ Seb. Thou hast it right, my dear, my best Alonzo !
 And that but petty reparation too ;
 But all I have to give.
 ‘ Dor. Your pardon, Sir ;
 You may do more, and ought.
 ‘ Seb. What, more than death ?
 ‘ Dor. Death ! why, that’s children’s sport ; a stage-
 We act it every night we go to bed. [play, death.
 Death to a man in misery is sleep.
 Would you, who perpetrated such a crime
 As frighten’d nature, made the saints above
 Shake heaven’s eternal pavement with their trembling
 To view that act, would you but barely die ?
 But stretch your limbs, and turn on t’other side,
 To lengthen out a black voluptuous slumber,
 And dream you had your sister in your arms ?
 ‘ Seb. To expiate this, can I do more than die ?
 ‘ Dor. Oh, yes, you must do more ; you must be
 You must be damn’d to all eternity ; [damn’d
 And sure self-murder is the readiest way.
 ‘ Seb. How, damn’d !
 ‘ Dor. Why, is that news ?
 ‘ Alv. Oh, horror, horror !
 ‘ Dor. What, thou a statesman,
 And make a business of damnation
 In such a world as this ! Why, ’tis a trade ;
 The scrivener, usurer, lawyer, shopkeeper,

‘ And

- And soldier, cannot live but by damnation.
- The politician does it by advance,
- And gives all gone before-hand.
- *Seb.* Oh, thou hast giv'n me such a glimpse of hell,
- So push'd me forward, even to the brink
- Of that irremeable burning gulf,
- That, looking in th' abyss, I dare not leap.
- And now I see what good thou mean'st my soul,
- And thank thy pious fraud. Thou hast, indeed,
- Appear'd a devil, but didst an angel's work.'

Dor. ' 'Twas the last remedy, to give you leisure :
 • For, if you could but think, I knew you safe.

Sed. I thank thee, my Alonzo. I will live;
 But never more to Portugal return :
 For to go back and reign, that were to shew
 Triumphant incest, and pollute the throne.

• *Alv.* Since ignorance—
 • *Seb.* Oh, palliate not my wound !
 • When you have argu'd all you can, 'tis incest.
 • No, 'tis resolv'd ; I charge you, plead no more :
 • I cannot live without Almeyda's sight,
 • Nor can I see Almeyda, but I sin.
 • Heav'n has inspir'd me with a sacred thought,
 • To live alone to Heav'n, and die to her.

• *Dor.* Mean you to turn an anchoret ?
 • *Seb.* What else ?

• The world was once too narrow for my mind ;
 • But one poor little nook will serve me now,
 • To hide me from the rest of human kind.
 • Afric has desarts wide enough to hold
 • Millions of monsters, and I am, sure, the greatest.

Dor. You may repent, and wish your crown too late.
 • *Seb.* Oh, never, never ! I am past the boy :
 • A sceptre's but a play-thing, and a globe
 • A bigger bounding stone. He who can leave
 • Almeyda, may renounce the rest with ease.'

Dor. Oh, truly great !

A soul fix'd high, and capable of heav'n.

Old as he is, your uncle Cardinal

Is not so far enamour'd of a cloyster,

But he will thank you for the crown you leave him.

Seb. To please him more, let him believe me dead ;
 That he may never dream I may return.

Alonzo, I am now no more thy king,
But still thy friend ; and, by that holy name,
Adjure thee, to perform my last request :
Make our conditions with yon captive king :
Secure me but my solitary cell ;
'Tis all I ask him for a crown restor'd.

‘ Dor. I will do more.

‘ But fear not Muley-Zeydan ; his soft metal
Melts down with easy warmth, runs in the mold,
And needs no further forge.’ [Exit Dor.
Re-enter Almeyda, led by Morayma, and followed by
her Attendants.

Seb. ‘ See where she comes again !
‘ By Heav’n, when I behold those beauteous eyes,
Repentance lags, and sin comes hurrying on.

Alm. This is too cruel !

‘ Seb. Speak’st thou of love, of fortune, or of death,
‘ Or double death ; for we must part, Almeyda ?

‘ Alm. I speak of all ;

‘ For all things that belong to us are cruel :

‘ But what’s most cruel, we must love no more.

‘ Oh, ’tis too much that I must never see you ;

‘ But not to love you is impossible :

‘ No, I must love you—Heav’n may bate me that,

‘ And charge that sinful sympathy of souls

‘ Upon our parents, when they lov’d too well.

‘ Seb. Good Heav’n ! thou speak’st my thought, and I

‘ Nay, then there’s incest in our very souls ; [speak thine.

‘ For we were form’d too like.

‘ Alm. Too like, indeed ;

‘ And yet not for each other.

‘ Sure, when we part, (for I resolv’d it too,

‘ Tho’ you propos’d it first) however distant,

‘ We shall be ever thinking of each other ;

‘ And, the same moment, for each other pray.

‘ Seb. But if a wish should come athwart our prayers—

‘ Alm. It would do well to curb it, if we could.

‘ Seb. We cannot look upon each other’s face ;

‘ But when we read our love we read our guilt :

‘ And yet, methinks, I cannot chuse but love.

‘ Alm. I would have ask’d you, if I durst, for shame,

‘ If still you lov’d ? You give it air before me !

‘ Ah, why were we not born both of a sex ?

‘ For then we might have lov’d without a crime.

' Why was not I your brother ? Tho' that wish
 ' Involv'd our parents guilt, we had not parted :
 ' We had been friends, and friendship is no incest.
 ' *Seb.* Alas, I know not by what name to call thee !
 ' Sister and wife are the two dearest names,
 ' And I would call thee both ; and both are sin.
 ' Unhappy we ! that still we must confound
 ' The dearest names into a common curse.
Alm. To love, and be belov'd, and yet be wretched !
 ' *Seb.* To have but one poor night of all our lives !
 ' It was, indeed, a glorious, guilty night ;
 ' So happy, that, forgive me, Heaven ! I wish,
 ' With all its guilt, it were to come again.
 ' Why did we know so soon, or why at all,
 ' That sin could be conceal'd in such a bliss ?
 ' *Alm.* Men have a larger privilege of words,
 ' Else I should speak — But we must part, Sebastian,
 ' That's all the name that I have left to call thee.
 ' I must not call thee by the name I would ;
 ' But when I say, Sebastian, dear Sebastian,
 ' I kiss the name I speak.
Seb. We must make haste, or we shall never part.
 ' I would say something that's as dear as this :
 ' Nay, would do more than say — One moment longer,
 ' And I should break thro' laws divine and human,
 ' And think them cobwebs, spread for little man,
 ' Which all the bulky herd of nature breaks.
 ' The vigorous young world was ignorant
 ' Of these restrictions ; 'tis decrepit now :
 ' Not more devout, but more decay'd and cold.
 ' All this is impious ; therefore we must part :
 ' For, gazing thus, I kindle at thy sight,
 ' And once, burnt down to tinder, light again
 ' Much sooner than before.

Re-enter Dorax.

Alm. Here comes the sad denouncer of my fate,
 To toll the mournful knell of separation ;
 While I, as on my death-bed, hear the sound,
 That warns me hence for ever.

Seb. [To Dor.] Now, be brief,
 And I will try to listen,
 ' And share the minute that remains, betwixt
 ' The care I owe my subjects, and my love.

Dor. Your fate has gratify'd you all she can ;

Gives easy misery, and makes exile pleasing.
 I trusted Muley-Zeydan, as a friend ;
 But swore him first to secrecy. He wept
 Your fortune, and with tears not squeez'd by art,
 But shed from nature, like a kindly shower.
 In short, he proffer'd more than I demanded,
 A safe retreat, a gentle solitude,
 ' Unvex'd with noise, and undisturb'd with fears :'
 I chose you one —

Alm. Oh, do not tell me where !
 For if I knew the place of his abode,
 I should be tempted to pursue his steps,
 And then we both were lost.

' *Seb.* Ev'n past redemption :
 ' For, if I knew thou wert on that design,
 ' (As I must know, because our souls are one)
 ' I should not wander, but by sure instinct,
 ' Should meet thee just half-way in pilgrimage,
 ' And close for ever : for I know my love
 ' More strong than thine, and I more frail than thou.
 ' *Alm.* Tell me not that ; for I must boast my crime,
 ' And cannot bear that thou shouldst better love.'

Dor. I may inform you both ; for you must go
 Where seas, and winds, and desarts will divide you.
 Under the ledge of Atlas lies a cave,
 Cut in the living rock, by Nature's hands ;
 The venerable seat of holy hermits,
 Who there, secure in separated cells,
 ' Sacred ev'n to the Moors,' enjoy devotion ;
 And from the purling streams, and savage fruits,
 Have wholesome bev'rage, and unbloody feasts.

Seb. 'Tis penance too voluptuous for my crime.
 ' *Dor.* Your subjects conscious of your life are few ;
 ' But all desirous to partake your exile,
 ' And to do office to your sacred person.
 ' The rest, who think you dead, shall be dismiss'd,
 ' Under safe convoy, till they reach your fleet.'

Alm. But how am wretched I to be dispos'd ?
 A vain enquiry, since I leave my Lord ;
 For all the world beside is banishment.

Dor. I have a sister, abbess in Terceras,
 Who lost her lover on her bridal day.

Alm. There fate provided me a fellow-turtle,
 To mingle sighs with sighs, and tears with tears.

Dor.

Dor. Last, for myself, if I have well fulfill'd
My sad commission, let me beg the boon,
To share the sorrows of your last recess,
And mourn the common losses of our loves.

‘ *Alv.* And what becomes of me? Must I be left
‘ (As age and time had worn me out of use)?
‘ These sinews are not yet so much unstrung,
‘ To fail me when my master should be serv'd:
‘ And when they are, then I will steal to death,
‘ Silent and unobserv'd, to save his tears.’

Seb. ‘ I've heard you both. Alvarez, have thy wish;
‘ But thine, Alonzo, thine is too unjust.
I charge thee, with my last commands, return,
And bless thy Violante with thy vows.
Antonio, be thou happy, too, in thine.
Last, let me swear you all to secrecy;
And to conceal my shame, conceal my life,

‘ *Dor. Ant. Mor.* We swear to keep it secret.’

Alm. Now, I would speak the last farewell, I cannot.
‘ It would be still farewell, a thousand times;
‘ And, multiply'd in echo's, still farewell.
‘ I will not speak, but think a thousand thousand.
‘ And be thou silent too, my last Sebastian;
‘ So, let us part in the dumb pomp of grief.
My heart's too great, or I would die this moment;
But Death, I thank him, in an hour, has made
A mighty journey, and I haste to meet him.

[She staggers, and her women hold her up.]

Seb. Help to support this feeble, drooping flower,
This tender sweet, so shaken by the storm;
For these fond arms must thus be stretch'd in vain,
And never, never must embrace her more—
‘ Tis past—my soul goes in that word—farewell!

[*Alv.* goes with *Seb.* to one end of the stage; *Women*, with
Alm. to the other.]

Dor. [Coming up to *Ant.* and *Mor.* who stand on the
middle of the stage.] ‘ Haste to attend Almeyda.’ For
Your father is forgiven; ‘ but to Antonio [your sake,
‘ He forfeits half his wealth.’ Be happy both;
And let Sebastian and Almeyda's fate,
This dreadful sentence to the world relate,
That unrepented crimes of parents dead,
Are justly punish'd on their children's head.

[*Exeunt.*]

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by ANTONIO and MORAYMA.

MORAYMA.

I Quak'd at heart, for fear the royal fashion,
Should have seduc'd us two to separation.
To be drawn in against our own desire,
Poor I to be a nun, poor you a friar.

Ant. I trembled, when the old man's hand was in,
He would have prov'd we were too near of kin :
Discovering old intrigues of love, like t'other,
Betwixt my father and thy sinful mother,
To make us sister Turk, and Christian brother.

Mor. Excuse me there ; that league should have been rather
Betwixt your mother and my Mufti father :
'Tis for my own, and my relations credit.
Your friends should bear the bastard, mine should get it.

Ant. Suppose us two Almeyda and Sebastian,
With incest prov'd upon us—

Mor. Without question
Their conscience was too queazy of digestion.

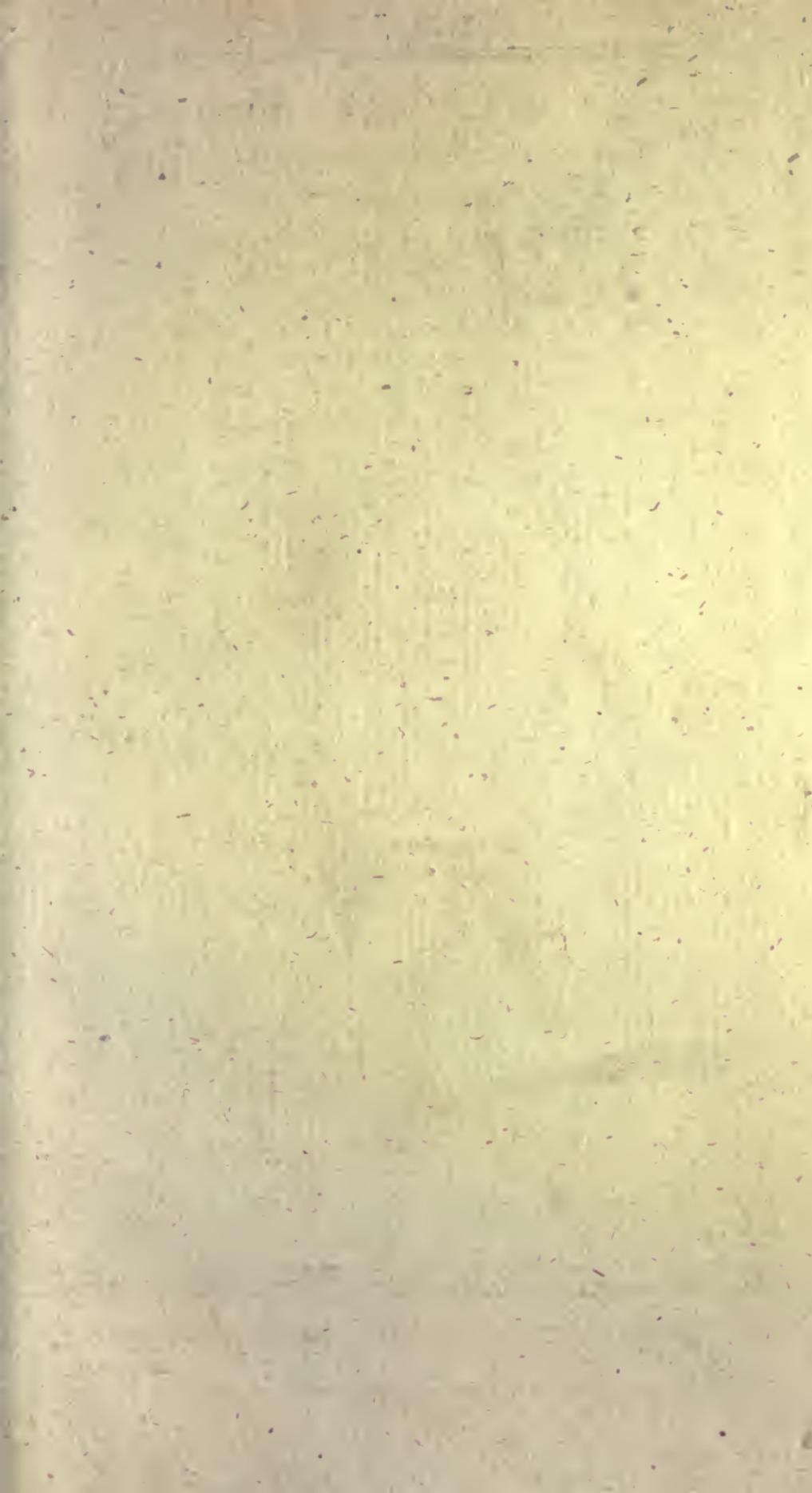
Ant. Thou wouldst have kept the counsel of thy brother,
And sinn'd till we repented of each other.

Mor. Beast as you are, on nature's laws to trample !
'Twere fitter that we follow'd their example.
And since all marriage in repentance ends,
'Tis good for us to part while we are friends.
To save a maid's remorses and confusions,
E'en leave me now, before we try conclusions.

Ant. To copy their example, first make certain
Of one good hour, like theirs, before our parting ;
Make a debauch, o'er night, of love and madness ;
And marry, when we wake, in sober sadness.

Mor. I'll follow no new sects of your inventing :
One night might cost me nine long months repenting.
First wed, and if you find that life a fetter,
Die when you please, the sooner, Sir the better.
My wealth would get me love ere I could ask it :
Oh, there's a strange temptation in the casket !
All these young sharpers would my grace importune,
And make me thund'ring votes of lives and fortune.

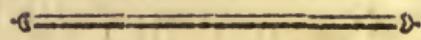






M. SHERIDAN in the Character of OEDIPUS.
What mean these exclamations on my Name?

B E L L ' S E D I T I O N .



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*Hi proprium decus & partum indignantur honorem ,
Ni teneant————*

VIRG.

*Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu , versate diurnâ .*

HERAT.



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Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

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THE
P R E F A C E.

THOUGH it be dangerous to raise too great an expectation, especially in works of this nature, where we are to please an unsatiable audience; yet 'tis reasonable to prepossess them in favour of an author, and, therefore both the prologue and epilogue informed you that OEdipus was the most celebrated piece of all antiquity; that Sophocles, not only the greatest wit, but one of the greatest men in Athens, made it for the stage at the public cost, and that it had the reputation of being his master-piece, not only amongst the seven of his which are still remaining, but of the greater number which are perished. Aristotle has more than once admired it in his book of poetry; Horace has mentioned it; Lucullus, Julius Cæsar, and other noble Romans, have written on the same subject, though their poems are wholly lost; but Seneca's is still preserved. In our own age, Corneille has attempted it, and it appears by his preface, with great success: but a judicious reader will easily observe how much the copy is inferior to the original. He tells you himself, that he owes a great part of his success to the happy episode of Theseus and Dirce; which is the same thing as if we should acknowledge, that we were indebted for our good fortune to the underplot of Adraustus, Eurydice, and Creon. The truth is, he miserably failed in the character of his hero. If he desired that OEdipus should be pitied, he should have made him a better man. He forgot that Sophocles had taken care to shew him in his first entrance, a just, a merciful, a successful, a religious prince: and, in short, a father of his country: instead of these, he has drawn him suspicious, designing, more anxious of keeping the Theban crown, than solicitous for the safety of his people; hectored by Theseus, contemned by Dirce, and scarce maintaining a second part in his own tragedy. This was an error in the first concoction: and therefore never to be mended in the second or third. He introduced a greater hero than OEdipus himself; for when Theseus was once there, that companion of Hércules must yield to none. The poet was obliged to furnish him with business, to make him an equipage suitable to his dignity, and, by following him too close, to lose his other King of Brentford in the crowd. Seneca, on the other side, as if there were no such thing as nature to be minded in a play, is always running after pompous expression, pointed sentences, and philosophical notions, more proper for the study than the stage. The

Frenchman followed a wrong scent, and the Roman was absolutely at cold hunting. All we could gather out of Corneille was, that an episode must be, but not his way ; and Seneca supplied us with no new hint, but only a relation which he makes of his Tiresias raising the ghost of Laius ; which is here performed in view of the audience ; the rites and ceremonies so far his, as he agreed with antiquity, and the religion of the Greeks : but he himself was beholden to Homer's Tiresias in the Odysses for some of them, and the rest have been collected from Heliodore's *Æthiopiques*, and Lucan's *Erietho*. Sophocles, indeed, is admirable every where ; and therefore we have followed him as close as possibly we could. But the Athenian theatre (whether more perfect than ours, is not now disputed) had a perfection differing from ours. You see there in every act a single scene, (or two at most) which manage the business of the play, and after that succeeds the chorus, which commonly takes up more time in singing, than there has been employed in speaking. The principal person appears almost constantly through the play ; but the inferior parts seldom above once in the whole tragedy. The conduct of our stage is much more difficult, where we are obliged never to lose any considerable character which we have once presented. Custom likewise has obtained, that we must form an under-plot of second persons, which must be depending on the first, and their bye-walks must be like those in a labyrinth, which all of them lead into the great parterre ; or like so many several lodging chambers, which have their outlets into the same gallery. Perhaps, after all, if we could think so, the ancient method, as it is the easiest, is also the most natural, and the best. For variety, as it is managed, is too often subject to breed distraction ; and while we would please too many ways, for want of art in the conduct, we please in none. But we have given you more already than was necessary for a preface, and, for ought we know, may gain no more by our instructions, than that politic nations like to do, who have taught their enemies to fight so long, that at last they are in a condition to invade them.



P R O L O G U E.

WHEN Athens all the Grecian states did guide,
 And Greece gave laws to all the world beside,
 Then Sophocles and Socrates did sit,
 Supreme in wisdom one, and one in wit :
 And wit from wisdom differ'd not in those,
 But as 'twas sung in verse, or said in prose.
 Then OEdipus, on crowded theatres,
 Drew all admiring eyes, and list'ning ears :
 The pleas'd spectator shouted every line,
 The noblest, manliest, and the best design !
 And every critick of each learned age,
 By this just model has reform'd the stage.
 Now, should it fail, (as Heav'n avert our fear !)
 Damn it in silence, lest the world should hear.
 For were it known this poem did not please,
 You might set up for perfect savages :
 Your neighbours would not look on you as men ;
 But think the nation all turn'd Picts again.
 Faith, as you manage matters, 'tis not fit,
 You should suspect yourselves of too much wit.
 Drive not the jest too far, but spare this piece :
 And, for this once, be not more wise than Greece.
 See twice ; do not pell-mell to damning fall,
 Like true-born Britons, who ne'er think at all.
 Pray, be advis'd ; and though at Mons yon won,
 On pointed cannon do not always run.
 With some respect to ancient wits proceed :
 You take the four first councils for your creed,
 But when you lay tradition wholly by,
 And on the private spirit alone rely,
 You turn fanatics in your poetry.
 If, notwithstanding all that we can say,
 You needs will have your penn'worths of the play,
 And come resolv'd to damn, because you pay,
 Record it, in memorial of the fact,
 The first play bury'd since the woollen act.

THE OEDIPUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>OEdipus,</i>	<i>Dioctes,</i>
<i>Adraſtus,</i>	<i>Pyracmon,</i>
<i>Creon,</i>	<i>Phorbas,</i>
<i>Tiresias,</i>	<i>Dymas,</i>
<i>Hæmon,</i>	<i>Ægeon,</i>
<i>Alcander,</i>	<i>Ghost of Laius.</i>

W O M E N.

Jocasta,
Eurydice,
Manto.

Priests, Citizens, Attendants, &c.

SCENE, THEBES.

OE D I P U S.

* * * The lines marked with inverted commas, "thus," are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

The curtain rises to a plaintive tune, representing the miseries of Thebes; dead bodies appear at a distance in the streets; some faintly go over the stage, others drop.

Enter Alcander, Diocles, and Pyracmon.

ALCANDER.

METHINKS we stand on ruins; nature shakes
About us, and the universal frame
So loose, that it but wants another push
To leap from off its hinges.

DIOC. 'No sun to cheer us; but a bloody globe
That rolls above; a bald and beauteous fire;
His face o'er-grown with scurf.' The Sun's sick too;
Shortly he'll be an earth.

PRY. Therefore the seasons
Lie all confus'd; and, by the Heav'ns neglected,
Forget themselves. 'Blind winter meets the summer
In his mid-way, and, seeing not his livery,
Has driv'n him headlong back: and the raw damps
With flaggy wings fly heavily about,
Scattering their pestilential colds and rheums,
Through all the lazy air.'

ALC. Hence murrains follow'd
On bleating flocks, and on the lowing herds:
At last, the malady
Grew more domestic, and the faithful dog
Dy'd at his master's feet.

DIOC. And next his master:
For all those plagues which earth and air had brooded,
First on inferior creatures try'd their force;
And last they seiz'd on man.'

PRY.

Pyr. 'And then a thousand deaths at once advanc'd,
 'And every dart took place. All was so sudden,
 'That scarce a first man fell—One but began
 'To wonder, and straight fell a wonder too ;
 'A third, who stoop'd to raise his dying friend,
 'Dropp'd in the pious act.'—Heard you that groan ?

[Groan within.]

Dioc. A troop of ghosts took flight together there :
 'Now Death's grown riotous, and will play no more
 'For single stakes ; but families and tribes.'
 How are we sure we breathe not now our last,
 And that, next minute,
 Our bodies, cast into some common pit,
 Shall not be built upon, and overlaid
 By half a people ?

Alc. There's a chain of causes
 Link'd to effects ; invincible necessity,
 That whate'er is, could not but so have been ;
 That's my security.

Enter Creon.

Cre. So had it need, when all our streets lie cover'd
 With dead and dying men ;
 And Earth exposes bodies on the pavements
 More than she hides in graves.
 Betwixt the bride and bridegroom have I seen
 The nuptial torch do common offices
 Of marriage and of death.

Dioc. Now OEdipus.
 (If he returns from war, our other plague)
 Will scarce find half he left, to grace his triumphs.

Pyr. A feeble Pæan will be sung before him.

Alc. He would do well to bring the wives and children
 Of conquer'd Argians, to renew his Thebes.

Cre. May funerals meet him at the city gates,
 With their detested omen.

Dioc. Of his children.

Cre. Nay, though she be my sister, of his wife.

Alc. Oh, that our Thebes might once again behold
 A monarch Theban born !

Dioc. We might have had one.

Pyr. Yes, had the people pleas'd.

Cre. Come, you're my friends—
 The Queen, my sister, after Laius' death,

Fear'd

Fear'd to lie single, and supply'd his place
With a young successor.

Dioc. He much resembles
Her former husband too.

Alc. I always thought so.

Pyr. When twenty winters more have grizzl'd his black
He will be very Laius. [locks,

Cre. So he will :

Mean time she stands provided of a Laius
More young and vigorous too, by twenty springs.
These women are such cunning purveyors !
Mark, where their appetites have once been pleas'd,
The same resemblance in a younger lover
Lies brooding in their fancies, the same pleasures,
And urges their remembrance to desire.

Dioc. Had merit, not her dotage, been consider'd,
Then Creon had been king : but OEdipus !
A stranger ! —

Cre. That word, stranger, I confess,
Sounds harshly in my ears.

Dioc. We are your creatures.
The people prone, as in all general ills,
To sudden change ; the King in wars abroad ;
The Queen a woman weak and unregarded ;
Euridice, the daughter of dead Laius,
A princess young, and beauteous, and unmarried.
Methinks, from these disjointed propositions
Something might be produc'd.

Cre. The gods have done
Their part, by sending this commodious plague.
But, Oh, the Princess ! her hard heart is shut,
By adamantine locks, against my love.

Alc. Your claim to her is strong ; you are betroth'd.

Pyr. True, in her nonage.

‘ *Alc.* But that let's remov'd ?

Dioc. I heard the Prince of Argos, young Adrastus,
When he was hostage here —

Cre. Oh, name him not ! the bane of all my hopes ;
That hot-brain'd, headlong warrior, has the charms
Of youth, and somewhat of a lucky rashness,
To please a woman yet more fool than he.
That thoughtless sex is caught by outward form,
And empty noise, and loves itself in man.

Alc.

Alc. But since the war broke out about our frontiers,
He's now a foe to Thebes.

Cre. But is not so to her. See, she appears ;
Once more I'll prove my fortune : you insinuate
Kind thoughts of me into the multitude ;
Lay load upon the court ; gull them with freedom ;
And you shall see them toss their tails, and gad,
As if the breeze had stung them.

Diec. We'll about it. [Exeunt *Alc.* *Dioc.* and *Pyr.*

Enter Eurydice.

Cre. Hail, royal maid ; thou bright Eurydice !
A lavish planet reign'd when thou wert born ;
And made thee of such kindred-mold to heav'n,
Thou seem'st more heav'n's than ours.

Eur. Cast round your eyes ;
Where late the streets were so thick sown with men,
Like Cadmus brood, they justled for the passage :
Now look for those erected heads, and see them
Like pebbles paving all our public ways :
When you have thought on this, then answer me,
If these be hours of courtship.

Cre. Yes, they are ;
For when the gods destroy so fast, 'tis time
We should renew the race.

Eur. What, in the midst of horror ?

Cre. Why not then ?

There's the more need of comfort.

Eur. Impious Creon !

Cre. Unjust Eurydice ! can you accuse me
Of love, which is Heav'n's precept, and not fear
That vengeance which you say pursues our crimes,
Should reach your perjuries ?

Eur. Still th' old argument.

I bade you cast your eyes on other men,

Now cast them on your self : think what you are.

Cre. A man.

Eur. A man !

Cre. Why doubt you ? I'm a man.

Eur. 'Tis well you tell me so, I should mistake you
For any other part o'th' whole creation,
Rather than think you man. Hence from my sight,
Thou poison to my eyes.

Cre. 'Twas you first poison'd mine ; and yet methinks
My face and person should not make you sport.

Eur.

Eur. You force me, by your importunities,
To shew you what you are.

Cre. A prince, who loves you :
And since your pride provokes me, worth your love,
Ev'n at its highest value.

Eur. Love from thee !
Why love renounc'd thee ere thou saw'st the light :
Nature herself start back when thou wert born ;
And cry'd, the work's not mine —
The midwife stood aghast ; and when she saw
Thy mountain back, and thy distorted legs,
Thy face itself,
Half-minted with the royal stamp of man,
And half o'ercome with beast, stood doubting long,
Whose right in thee were more ;
And knew not, if to burn thee in the flames,
Were not the holier work.

Cre. Am I to blame, if Nature threw my body
In so perverse a mould ? Yet when she cast
Her envious hand upon my supple joints,
Unable to resist, and rumpled them
On heaps in their dark lodging, to revenge
Her bungled work, she stamp'd my mind more fair ;
And as from chaos, huddled and deform'd,
The god struck fire, and lighted up the lamps
That beautify the sky, so he inform'd
This ill-shap'd body with a daring soul ;
And making less than man, he made me more.

Eur. No ; thou art all one error ; soul and body.
The first young trial of some unskill'd pow'r ;
Rude in the making art, and ape of Jove.
Thy crooked mind within hunch'd out thy back ;
And wander'd in thy limbs : to thy own kind
Make love, if thou can'st find it in the world ;
And seek not from our sex to raise an off-spring,
Which, mingled with the rest, would tempt the gods
To cut off human kind.

Cre. No ; let them leave
The Argian prince for you ; that enemy
Of Thebes has made you false, and break the vows
You made to me.

Eur. They were my mother's vows,
Made in my nonage.

Cre. But hear me, maid :
This blot of nature, this deform'd, loath'd Creon,
Is master of a sword, to reach the blood
Of your young minion, spoil the gods' fine work,
And stab you in his heart.

Eur. This when thou dost, Then may'st thou still be curs'd with loving me ;
And, as thou art, be still unpitied, loath'd ;
And let his ghost—No, let his ghost have rest :
But let the greatest, fiercest, foulest fury,
Let Creon haunt himself. [Exit Eur.

Cre. 'Tis true, I am
What she has told me, an offence to sight :
My body opens inward to my soul, And lets in day to make my vices seen
By all discerning eyes, but the blind vulgar.
I must make haste ere OEdipus return,
To snatch the crown and her ; for I still love ;
But love with malice ; as an angry cur
Snarls while he feeds, so will I seize and stanch
The hunger of my love on this proud beauty,
And leave the scraps for slaves.

Enter Tiresias, leaning on a staff, and led by his daughter Manto.

What makes this blind prophetic fool abroad !
Would his Apollo had him ; he's too holy
For earth and me ; I'll shun his walk ; and seek
My popular friends. [Exit Creon.

Tir. A little farther ; yet a little farther,
Thou wretched daughter of a dark old man,
Conduct my weary steps : and thou, who seest
For me and for thyself, beware thou tread not
With impious steps upon dead corps ; now stay ;
Methinks I draw more open, vital air.
Where are we ?

Man. Under covert of a wall :
The most frequented once, and noisy part
Of Thebes, now midnight silence reigns ev'n here ;
And grass untrodden springs beneath our feet.

Tir. If there be nigh this place a sunny bank,
There let me rest a-while : a sunny bank !
Alas, how can it be, where no sun shines !
But a dim winking taper in the skies,

That nods, and scarce holds up his drowsy head
To glimmer through the damps !

[*A noise within.* Follow, follow, follow ! A Creon,
a Creon, a Creon !

Hark ! a tumultuous noise, and Creon's name
Thrice echo'd.

Man. Fly ! the tempest drives this way.

Tir. Whither can age and blindness take their flight ?
If I could fly, what could I suffer worse,
Secure of greater ills !

[*Noise again, Creon, Creon, Creon !*

*Enter Creon, Diocles, Alcander, Pyracmon ; followed
by the crowd.*

Cre. I thank ye, countrymen ; but must refuse
The honours you intend me ; they're too great ;
And I am too unworthy ; think again,
And make a better choice.

1st Cit. Think twice ! I ne'er thought twice in all my life : that's double work.

2d Cit. My first word is always my second ; and therefore I'll have no second word ; and therefore once again, I say, a Creon.

All. A Creon, a Creon, a Creon !

Cre. Yet hear me, fellow-citizens.

Dioc. Fellow-citizens ! there was a word of kindness.

Alc. When did OEdipus salute you by that familiar

1st Cit. Never, never ; he was too proud. [name ?

Cret. Indeed he could not, for he was a stranger :

But under him our Thebes is half destroy'd.

Forbid it, Heav'n, the residue should perish
Under a Theban born.

'Tis true, the gods might send this plague among you,
Because a stranger rul'd : but what of that,
Can I redress it now ?

3d Cit. Yes, you or none.

'Tis certain that the gods are angry with us,
Because he reigns.

Cre. OEdipus may return : you may be ruin'd.

1st Cit. Nay, if that be the matter, we are ruined already.

2d Cit. Half of us that are here present, were living men but yesterday, and we that are absent do but drop and drop, and no man knows whether he be dead or

living. And therefore while we are sound and well, let us satisfy our consciences, and make a new king.

3d Cit. Ha, if we were but worthy to see another coronation, and then, if we must die, we'll go merrily together.

All. To the question, to the question.

Dioc. Are you content, Creon should be your king?

All. A Creon, a Creon, a Creon!

Tir. Hear me, ye Thebans, and thou, Creon, hear me.

1st Cit. Who's that would be heard? We'll hear no man: we can scarce hear one another.

Tir. I charge you, by the gods, to hear me.

2d Cit. Oh, 'tis Apollo's priest, we must hear him; 'tis the old blind prophet that sees all things.

3d Cit. He comes from the gods too, and they are our betters; and in good manners we must hear him. Speak, prophet.

2d Cit. For coming from the gods that's no great matter, they can all say that; but he's a great scholar; he can make almanacks, an he were put to't, and therefore, I say, hear him.

Tir. When angry Heav'n scatters its plagues among you, Is it for nought, ye Thebans? Are the gods Unjust for punishing? Are there no crimes Which pull this vengeance down?

1st Cit. Yes, yes, no doubt there are some sins stirring, that are the cause of all.

3d Cit. Yes, there are sins; or we should have no taxes.

2d Cit. For my part, I can speak it with a safe conscience, I ne'er finned in all my life.

1st Cit. Nor I.

3d Cit. Nor I.

2d Cit. Then we are all justified, the sin lies not at our

Tir. All justified alike, and yet all guilty; [doors. Were every man's false dealing brought to light, His envy, malice, lying, perjuries, His weights and measures, th' other man's extortions, With what face could you tell offended Heav'n, You had not finn'd?

2d Cit. Nay, if these be sins, the case is altered; for my part I never thought any thing but murder had been a sin.

Tir. And yet, as if all these were less than nothing, You

You add rebellion to them, impious Thebans !
 Have you not sworn before the gods to serve
 And to obey this OEdipus, your King
 By public voice elected ? Answer me,
 If this be true !

2d Cit. This is true ; but it's a hard world, neighbours,
 If a man's oath must be his master.

Cre. Speak, Diocles ; all goes wrong.

Dioc. How are you traitors, countrymen of Thebes ?
 This holy fire, who presses you with oaths,
 Forgets your first ; were you not sworn before
 To Laius and his blood ?

All. We were ; we were,

Dioc. While Laius has a lawful successor,
 Your first oath still must bind : Eurydice
 Is heir to Laius ; let her marry Creon :
 Offended Heav'n will never be appeas'd
 While OEdipus pollutes the throne of Laius,
 A stranger to his blood.

All. We'll no OEdipus, no OEdipus.

1st Cit. He puts the prophet in a mouse-hole.

2d Cit. I knew it would be so ; the last man ever speaks
 the best reason.

Tir. Can benefits thus die, ungrateful Thebans !
 Remember yet, when after Laius' death,
 The monster Sphinx laid your rich country waste,
 Your vineyards spoil'd, your labouring oxen flew ;
 Yourselves for fear mew'd up within your walls,
 She, taller than your gates, o'er-look'd your town ;
 But when she rais'd her bulk to sail above you,
 She drove the air around her like a whirlwind,
 And shaded all beneath ; till stooping down,
 She clapp'd her leathern wing again your tow'rs,
 And thrust out her long neck, ev'n to your doors.

Dioc. Alc. Pyr. We'll hear no more.

Tir. You durst not meet in temples
 T' invoke the gods for aid, the proudest he
 Who leads you now, then cower'd, like a dar'd lark :
 This Creon shook for fear,
 The blood of Laius curdled in his veins ;
 'Till OEdipus arriv'd.
 Call'd by his own high courage and the gods,
 Himself to you a god : ye offer'd him

Your queen and crown ; (but what was then your crown ?)
And Heav'n authoriz'd it by his success.
Speak then, who is your lawful king ?

All. 'Tis OEdipus.

Tir. 'Tis OEdipus indeed : your king more lawful
Than yet you dream ; for something still there lies
In heav'n's dark volume, which I read through mists :
'Tis great, prodigious ; 'tis a dreadful birth,
Of wond'rous fate ; and now, just now disclosing.
I see, I see, how terrible it dawns :
And my soul sickens with it.

1st Cit. How the god shakes him ! [umph !]

Tir. He comes ! he comes ! Victory ! Conquest ! Tri-
But, Oh, guiltless and guilty ! Murder ! Parricide !
Incest ! Discovery ! Punishment — 'tis ended,
And all your sufferings o'er.

A trumpet within : enter Hæmon.

Hæm. Rouze up, you Thebans ; tune your Io Pæans !
Your king returns ; the Argians are o'ercome ;
Their warlike prince in single combat taken,
And led in bands by godlike OEdipus.

All. OEdipus, OEdipus, OEdipus !

Cre. Furies confound his fortune ! —

Haste, all haste . [Aside.]
And meet with blessings our victorious king ;
Decree processions ; bid new holy-days ;
Crown all the statues of our gods with garlands ;
And raise a brazen column, thus inscrib'd :
To OEdipus, now twice a conqueror : deliverer of his
Trust me, I weep for joy to see this day. [Thebes.]

Tir. Yes, Heav'n knows how thou weep'st : — Go, coun-
And, as you use to supplicate your gods — [trymen,
So meet your king with bayes, and olive-branches :
Bow down, and touch his knees, and beg from him
An end of all your woes ; for only he
Can give it you. [Exit Tiresias, the people following.]
Enter OEdipus in triumph ; Adrastus' prisoner ; Dymas,
train.

Cre. All hail, great OEdipus ;
Thou mighty conqueror, hail ; welcome to Thebes ;
To thy own Thebes ; to all that's left of Thebes ;
For half thy citizens are swept away,
And wanting for thy triumphs : [And]

And we, the happy remnant, only live
To welcome thee, and die.

OEdip. Thus pleasure never comes sincere to man ;
But lent by Heav'n upon hard usury ;
And, while Jove holds us out the bowl of joy,
Ere it can reach our lips, it's dash'd with gall
By some left-handed god. Oh, mournful triumph !
Oh, conquest gain'd abroad, and lost at home !
Oh, Argos ! now rejoice, for Thebes lies low ;
Thy slaughter'd sons now smile, and think they won ;
When they can count more Theban ghosts than theirs.

Adr. No ; Argos mourns with Thebes ; you temper'd so
Your courage while you fought, that mercy seem'd
The manlier virtue, and much more prevail'd.
While Argos is a people, think your Thebes
Can never want for subjects. Every nation
Will crowd to serve where *OEdipus* commands.

Cre. [To *Hæm.*] How mean it shows to fawn upon the
victor !

Hæm. Had you beheld him fight, you had said other-
Come, 'tis brave bearing in him, not to envy [wise :
Superior virtue.

OEdip. This indeed is conquest,
To gain a friend like you : why were we foes ?

Adr. 'Caufe we were kings, and each disdain'd an equal.
I fought to have it in my pow'r to do
What thou hast done ; and so to use my conquest,
To shew thee, honour was my only motive,
Know this, that were my army at thy gates,
And Thebes thus waste, I would not take the gift,
Which, like a toy dropt from the hands of fortune,
Lay for the next chance-comer.

OEdip. [Embracing.] No more captive,
But brother of the war : 'tis much more pleasant,
And safer, trust me, thus to meet thy love,
Than when hard gantlets clench'd our warlike hands,
And keep them from soft use.

Adr. My conqueror !

OEdip. My friend ! that other name keeps enmity alive...
But longer to detain thee were a crime :
To love, and to Eurydice, go free :
Such welcome as a ruined town can givé,
Expect from me ; the rest let her supply.

Adr. I go without a blush, though conquer'd twice,
By you, and by my princess. [Exit Adraustus.]

Cre. [Aside.] Then I am conquer'd thrice; by OEdipus,
And her, and ev'n by him, the slave of both:
Gods, I'm beholden to you, for making me your image,
Would I could make you mine!

Enter the people with branches in their hands, holding them up, and kneeling: two priests before them.

Alas, my people!

What means this speechless sorrow, down-cast eyes,
And lifted hands? If there be one among you
Whom grief has left a tongue, speak for the rest.

1st Pr. Oh, father of thy country!

To thee these knees are bent, these eyes are lifted,
As to a visible divinity.

A prince on whom heav'n safely might repose
The busines of mankind: for Providence
Might on thy 'careful' bosom sleep secure,
And leave her task to thee.

But where's the glory of thy former acts?
Ev'n that's destroy'd, when none shall live to speak it.
Millions of subjects shalt thou have; but mute.
A people of the dead; a crowded desart;
A midnight silence at the noon of day.

OEdip. Oh, were our gods as ready with their pity,
As I with mine, this presence should be throng'd
With all I left alive; and my sad eyes
Not search in vain for friends, whose promis'd sight
Flatter'd my toils of war.

1st Pr. Twice our deliverer.

OEdip. Nor are now your vows
Address'd to one who sleeps.

When this unwelcome news first reach'd my ears,
Dymas was sent to Delphos, to enquire
The cause and cure of this contagious ill:
And is this day return'd? But since his message
Concerns the public, I refus'd to hear it,
But in this general presence: let him speak.

Dym. A dreadful answer from the hallow'd urn,
And sacred Tripos did the priestes give,
In these mysterious words.

THE ORACLE. "Shed in a cursed hour, by cursed hand,
Blood-royal unreveng'd has curs'd the land.

When

When Laius' death is expiated well,
Your plague shall cease. The rest let Laius tell."

OEdip. Dreadful indeed! Blood! and a king's blood
And such a king's, and by his subjects shed! [too;
(Else why this curse on Thebes?) no wonder then
If monsters, wars, and plagues, revenge such crimes!
If Heav'n be just, its whole artillery,
All must be empty'd on us: not one bolt
Shall err from Thebes; but more be call'd for, more:
New moulded thunder of a larger size;
Driv'n by whole Jove. What, touch anointed pow'r!
Then, gods, beware; Jove would himself be next;
Could you but reach him too.

2d Pr. We mourn the sad remembrance.

OEdip. Well you may:

Worse than a plague infects you: y're devoted
To mother earth, and to th' infernal pow'rs:
Hell has a right in you: I thank you, gods,
That I'm no Theban born. How my blood curdles!
As if this curse touch'd me, and touch'd me nearer
Than all this presence! — Yes, 'tis a king's blood,
And I, a king, am ty'd in deeper bonds
To expiate this blood — But where, from whom,
Or how must I atone it? Tell me, Thebans,
How Laius fell; for a confus'd report
Pass'd through my ears, when first I took the crown:
But full of hurry, like a morning dream,
It vanish'd in the business of the day.

1st Pr. He went in private forth; but thinly follow'd;
And ne'er return'd to Thebes.

OEdip. Nor any from him? Came there no attendant?
None to bring the news?

2d Pr. But one; and he so wounded,
He scarce drew breath to speak some few faint words.

OEdip. What were they? Something may be learn'd
from thence.

1st Pr. He said a band of robbers watch'd their passage;
Who took advantage of a narrow way
To murder Laius and the rest: himself
Left too for dead.

OEdip. Made you no more enquiry,
But took this bare relation?

2d Pr. 'Twas neglected;

For then the monster Sphinx began to rage ;
And present cares soon buried the remote ;
So was it hush'd, and never since reviv'd.

OEdip. Mark, Thebans, mark !
Just then, the Sphinx began to rage among you ;
The gods took hold ev'n of th' offending minute,
And dated thence your woes : thence will I trace them.

1st Pr. 'Tis just thou should'it.

OEdip. Hear then this dreadful imprecation ; hear it :
'Tis laid on all ; not any one exempt :
Bear witness, Heav'n, avenge it on the perjur'd.
If any Theban born, if any stranger
Reveal this murder, or produce its author,
Ten Attick talents be his just reward :
But, if for fear, for favour, or for hire,
The murd'rer he conceal, the curse of Thebes
Fall heavy on his head : unite our plagues,
Ye gods, and place them there : from fire and water,
Converse, and all things common, be he banish'd.
But for the murderer's self, unfound by man,
Find him, ye pow'rs cœlestial and infernal ;
And the same fate or worse than Laius met,
Let be his lot : his children be accurst ;
His wife and kindred, all of his be curs'd.

Both Pr. Confirm it, Heav'n !

Enter Jocasta, attended by women.

Joc. At your devotions ! Heav'n succeed your wishes ;
And bring th' effect of these your pious pray'rs
On you, on me, and all.

Pr. Avert this omen, Heav'n ?

OEdip. Oh, fatal found, unfortunate Jocasta !
What hast thou said ? An ill hour hast thou chosen
For these foreboding words ! Why, we were cursing !

Joc. Then may that curse fall only where you laid it.

OEdip. Speak no more !

For all thou say'st is ominous : we were cursing ;
And that dire imprecation hast thou fasten'd
On Thebes, and thee and me, and all of us.

Joc. Are then my blessings turn'd into a curse ?
Oh, unkind OEdipus ! My former Lord.
Thought me his blessing : be thou like my Laius.

OEdip. What yet again ? The third time hast thou
curs'd me :

'This

This imprecation was for Laius' death,
And thou hast wish'd me like him.

Joc. Horror seizes me!

OEdip. Why dost thou gaze upon me? Pr'ythee, love,
Take off thy eye; it burdens me too much.

Joc. The more I look, the more I find of Laius:
His speech, his garb, his action; nay, his frown;
(For I have seen it;) but ne'er bent on me.

OEdip. Are we so like?

Joc. In all things but his love.

OEdip. I love thee more: so well I love, words can-
not speak how well.

No pious son e'er lov'd his mother more
Than I my dear Jocasta.

Joc. I love you too

The self-same way; and when you chid, methought
A mother's love start up in your defence,
And bade me not be angry: be not you:
For I love Laius still, as wives should love:
But you more tenderly; as part of me;
And when I have you in my arms, methinks
I lull my child asleep.

OEdip. Then we are blest:
And all these curses sweep along the skies
Like empty clouds; but drop not on our heads.

Joc. I have not joy'd an hour since you departed,
For public miseries, and for private fears;
But this blest meeting has o'er-paid 'em all.
Good fortune that comes seldom comes more welcome.
All I can wish for now, is your consent
To make my brother happy.

OEdip. How, Jocasta?

Joc. By marriage with his niece, Eurydice?

OEdip. Uncle and niece; there are too near, my love:
'Tis too like incest: 'tis offence to kind:
Had I not promis'd, were there no Adrastus,
No choice but Creon left her of mankind,
They should not marry; speak no more of it;
The thought disturbs me.

Joc. Heav'n can never bless.
A vow so broken, which I made to Creon;
Remember he's my brother.

OEdip. That's the bar;

And

And she thy daughter: nature would abhor
To be forc'd back again upon herself,
And like a whirlpool swallow her own streams.

Joc. Be not displeas'd: I'll move the suit no more.

OEdip. No, do not; for, I know not why, it shakes me
When I but think on incest; move we forward
To thank the gods for my success, and pray
To wash the guilt of royal blood away. [Ex. omnes.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *an open Gallery. A Royal Bedchamber being supposed behind.*

The Time, Night. Thunder, &c.

Enter Hæmon, Aleander, and Pyracmon.

HÆMON.

SURE 'tis the end of all things; Fate has torn
The lock of time off, and his head is now
The ghastly ball of round eternity!
Call you these peals of thunder, but the yawn
Of bellowing clouds? By Jove, they seem to me
The world's last groans; and those vast sheets of flame
Are its last blaze! The tapers of the god,
The sun and moon, run down like waxen-globes;
The shooting stars end all in purple jellies,
And Chaos is at hand.

Pyr. 'Tis midnight, yet there's not a Theban sleeps,
But such as ne'er must wake. All crowd about
The palace, and implore, as from a god,
Help of the King; who, from the battlement,
By the red lightning's glare, descry'd afar,
Atones the angry powers. [Thunder, &c.

Hæm. Ha! Pyracmon, look;
Behold, Aleander, from yon' west of heav'n,
The perfect figures of a man and woman:
A scepter bright with gems in each right hand,
Their flowing robes of dazzling purple made,
Distinctly yonder in that point they stand,

Just

Just west ; a bloody red stains all the place ;
And see, their faces are quite hid in clouds.

Pyr. Clusters of golden stars hang o'er their heads,
And seem so crowded, that they burst upon them :
All dart at once their baleful influence
In leaking fire.

Alc. Long-bearded comets stick,
Like flaming porcupines, to their left sides,
As they would shoot their quills into their hearts.

Hæm. But see ! the king, and queen, and all the court !
Did ever day or night shew ought like this ?

[*Thunders again. The Scene draws, and discovers the Prodigies.*]

Enter OEdipus, Jocasta, Eurydice, Adraustus, and all coming forward with Amazement.

OEdip. Answer, you Pow'rs divine ; spare all this noise,
This rack of heav'n, and speak your fatal pleasure.

Why breaks yon dark and dusky orb away ?

Why from the bleeding womb of monstrous night,
Burst forth such myriads of abortive stars ?

Ha ! my Jocasta, look ! the silver moon !

A settling crimson stains her beauteous face !

She's all o'er blood ! and look, behold again,

What mean the mystic heav'ns she journeys on ?

A vast eclipse darkens the labouring planet :

Sound there, found all our instruments of war ;

Clarions and trumpets, silver, brass, and iron,

And beat a thousand drums to help her labour.

Adr. 'Tis vain ; you see the prodigies continue ;
Let's gaze no more, the gods are humorous.

OEdip. Forbear, rash man—Once more I ask your If that the glow worm light of human reason [pleasure !

Might dare to offer at immortal knowledge,

And cope with gods, why all this storm of nature ?

Why do the rocks split, and why rolls the sea ?

Why these portents in heav'n, and plagues on earth ?

Why yon gigantic forms, ethereal monsters ?

Alas ! is all this but to fright the dwarfs

Which your own hands have made ? Then be it so.

Or if the fates resolve some expiation

For murder'd Laius : hear me, hear me, gods !

Hear me thus prostrate : spare this groaning land,

Save innocent Thebes, stop the tyrant Death ;

Do this, and lo I stand up an oblation
To meet your swiftest and severest anger,
Shoot all at once, and strike me to the centre.

[*The Cloud draws that veil'd the Heads of the Figures of the Sky, and shews them crowned with the Names of OEdipus and Jocasta written above in great Characters of Gold.*

Adr. Either I dream, and all my cooler senses
Are vanish'd with that cloud that fleets away,
Or just above those two majestic heads,
I see, I read distinctly in large gold,
OEdipus and Jocasta.

Alc. I read the same.

Adr. 'Tis wonderful ; yet ought not man to wade
Too far in the vast deep of destiny.

[*Thunder, and the Prodigies vanish.*

Joc. My Lord, my OEdipus, why gaze you now,
When the whole heav'n is clear, as if the gods
Had some new monsters made ? Will you not turn,
And blefs your people, who devour each word
You breathe ?

OEdip. It shall be so.

Yes, I will die, Oh, Thebes, to save thee !
Draw from my heart my blood, with more content
Than e'er I wore thy crown. Yet, Oh, Jocasta !
By all th' indearments of miraculous love,
By all our languishings, our fears in pleasure,
Which oft have made us wonder ; here I swear
On thy fair hand, upon thy breast I swear,
I cannot call to mind, from budding childhood
To blooming youth, a crime by me committed,
For which the awful gods should doom my death.

Joc. 'Tis not you, my Lord,
But he who murder'd Laius, frees the land :
Were you, which is impossible, the man,
Perhaps my poignard first should drink your blood ;
But you are innocent, as your Jocasta,
From crimes like those. This made me violent
To save your life, which you unjust would lose :
Nor can you comprehend, with deepest thought,
'The horrid agony you cast me in,
When you resolv'd to die.

OEdip. Is't possible ?

Joc. Alas, why start you so ? Her stiff'ning grief,

Wh-

Who saw her children slaughter'd all at once,
Was dull to mine : methinks I should have made
My bosom bare against the armed god,
To save my OEdipus !

OEdip. I pray, no more.

Joc. You've silenc'd me, my Lord.

OEdip. Pardon me, dear Jocasta !

Pardon a heart that sinks with sufferings,
And can but vent itself in sobs and murmurs :
Yet to restore my peace, I'll find him out.
Yes, yes, you gods ! you shall have ample vengeance
On Laius' murderer. O, the traitor's name !
I'll know't, I will ; art shall be conjur'd for it,
And nature all unravell'd.

Joc. Sacred Sir —

OEdip. Rage will have way, and 'tis but just ; I'll fetch
Tho' lodg'd in air, upon a dragon's wing, [him,
Tho' rocks should hide him : nay he shall be dragg'd
From hell, if charms can hurry him along :
His ghost shall be, by sage Tirefias' power,
(Tirefias, that rules all beneath the moon)
Confin'd to flesh; to suffer death once more ;
And then be plung'd in his first fires again.

Enter Creon.

Cre. My Lord,
Tirefias attends your pleasure.

OEdip. Haste, and bring him in.
O, my Jocasta, Eurydice, Adraustus,
Creon, and all ye Thebans, now the end
Of plagues, of madness, murders, prodigies,
Draws on : this battle of the heav'ns and earth
Shall by his wisdom be reduc'd to peace.

*Enter Tirefias, leaning on a staff, led by his daughter Manto,
followed by other Thebans.*

O thou, whose most aspiring mind
Knows all the business of the courts above,
Opens the closets of the gods, and dares
To mix with Jove himself and Fate at council ;
O prophet, answ'r me, declare aloud
The traitor who conspir'd the death of Laius :
Or be they more, who from malignant stars
Have drawn this plague that blasts unhappy Thebes ?

Tir. We must no more than Fate comissions us

To tell ; yet something and of moment I'll unfold,
 If that the god would wake ; I feel him now,
 • Like a strong spirit charm'd into a tree,
 • That leaps and moves the wood without a wind :
 • The rouzed god, as all this while he lay,
 • Atomb'd alive, starts and dilates himself ;
 He struggles, and he tears my aged trunk
 With holy fury, ' my old arteries bust ;
 • My rivel'd skin,
 • Like parchment, crackles at the hallow'd fire ;
 • I shall be young again : ' Manto, my daughter,
 • Thou hast a voice that might have sav'd the bard
 • Of Thrace, and forc'd the raging Bacchanals,
 • With lifted prongs, to listen to thy airs :'
 O charm this god, this fury in my bosom,
 Lull him with tuneful notes, and artful strings,
 With pow'rful strains ; ' Manto, my lovely child,
 Sooth the unruly godhead to be mild.'

SONG *to A P O L L O.*

Phœbus, god belov'd by men,
 At thy dawn, every beast is rouz'd in his den ;
 At thy setting, all the birds of thy absence complain,
 And we die, all die till the morning comes again.

Phœbus, god belov'd by men !
 Idol of the Eastern kings,
 Awful as the god who flings
 His thunder round, and the lightning wings ;
 God of songs, and Orphean strings,
 Who to this mortal bosom brings
 All harmonious heav'nly things !
 Thy drouzy prophet to revive,
 Ten thousand thousand forms before him drive ;
 With chariots and horses all o'fire awake him,
 Convulsions, and furies, and prophesies shake him :
 Let him tell it in groans, tho' he bend with the load,
 Tho' he burst with the weight of the terrible god.

Tir. The wretch, who shed the blood of old Labdacus,
 Lives, and is great ; [des,
 But cruel greatness ne'er was long :
 The first of Laius' blood his life did seize,

And

And urg'd his fate,
Which else had lasting been and strong,
The wretch, who Laius kill'd must bleed or fly ;
Or Thebes, consum'd with plagues, in ruins lie.

OEdip. The first of Laius' blood ! pronounce the person ;
May the god roar from thy prophetic mouth,
That even the dead may start up, to behold.
Name him, I say, that most accursed wretch,
For, by the stars, he dies !
Speak, I command thee ;
By Phœbus, speak ; for sudden death's his doom ;
Here shall he fall, bleed on this very spot ;
His name, I charge thee once more, speak.

Tir. 'Tis lost,
Like what we think can never shun remembrance ;
Yet of a sudden's gone beyond the clouds.

OEdip. Fetch it from thence ; I'll have it, where-e'er
Cre. Let me intreat you, sacred Sir, be calm, [it be.
And Creon shall point out the great offender.
'Tis true, respect of nature might enjoin
Me silence, at another time ; but, oh,
Much more the pow'r of my eternal love !
That, that should strike me dumb : yet, Thebes, my coun-
I'll break through all to succour thee, poor city. [try—
O, I must speak.

OEdip. Speak then, if ought thou know'st :
As much thou seem'st to know, delay no longer.

Cre. O beauty ! O illustrious royal maid !
To whom my vows were ever paid till now,
And with such modest, chaste and pure affection,
The coldest nymph might read 'em without blushing.
Art thou the murd'res, then, of wretched Laius ?
And I, must I accuse thee ? Oh, my tears !
Why will you fall in so abhor'd a cause ?
But that thy beauteous, barbarous hand destroy'd
Thy father (O monstrous act !) both gods
And men at once take notice.

OEdip. Eurydice !

Eur. Traitor, go on ; I scorn thy little malice,
And knowing more my perfect innocence,
Than gods and men, then how much more than thee,
Who art their opposite, and form'd a liar,

I thus disdain thee ! Thou once didst talk of love ;
Because I hate thy love,
Thou dost accuse me.

Adr. Villain, inglorious villain,
And traitor, doubly damn'd, who durst blaspheme
The spotless virtue of the brightest beauty ;
'Thou dy'st : nor shall the sacred majesty

[Draws and wounds him.]

That guards this place, preserve thee from my rage.

OEdip. Disarm them both. Prince, I shall make you
That I can tame you twice. Guards, seize him. *[know*

Adr. Sir,
I must acknowledge in another cause
Repentance might abash me ; but I glory
In this, and smile to see the traitor's blood.

OEdip. Creon, you shall be satisfy'd at full.

Cre. My hurt is nothing, Sir ; but I appeal
To wise Tiresias, if my accusation
Be not most true. The first of Laius' blood
Gave him his death. Is there a prince before her ?
Then she is faultless, and I ask her pardon.
And may this blood ne'er cease to drop, O Thebes,
If pity of thy sufferings did not move me
To shew the cure which Heav'n itself prescrib'd.

Eur. Yes, Thebans, I will die to save your lives,
More willingly than you can wish my fate ;
But let this good, this wise, this holy man,
Pronounce my sentence : for to fall by him,
By the vile breath of that prodigious villain,
Would sink my soul, tho' I should die a martyr.

Adr. Unhand me, slaves. O mightiest of kings,
See at your feet a prince not us'd to kneel ;
Touch not Eurydice, by all the gods,
As you would save your Thebes, but take my life :
For should she perish, Heav'n would heap plagues on
Rain sulphur down, hurl kindled bolts *[plagues,*
Upon your guilty heads.

Cre. You turn to gallantry, what is but justice :
Proot will be easy made. Adrastus was
The robber who bereft th' unhappy king
Of life ; because he flatly had deny'd
To make so poor a prince his son-in-law :

Therefore

Therefore 'twere fit that both should perish.

I Theb. Both, let both die.

All Theb. Both, both ; let them die.

OEdip. Hence you wild herd ! For your ring-leader
He shall be made example. Hæmon, take him. [here,

I Theb. Mercy ! O mercy !

OEdip. Mutiny in my presence !

Hence, let me see that busy face no more.

Tir. Thebans, what madness makes you drunk with
Enough of guilty death's already acted ; [rage ?

Fierce Creon has accused Eurydice,

With prince Adraustus ; which the god reproves
By inward checks, and leaves their fates in doubt.

OEdip. Therefore instruct us what remains to do,
Or suffer ; for I feel a sleep like death
Upon me, and I sigh to be at rest.

Tir. Since that the pow'rs divine refuse to clear
The mystic deed, I'll to the Grove of Furies ;
There I can force the infernal gods to shew
Their horrid forms ; each trembling ghost shall rise,
And leave their grizly king without a waiter.

For prince Adraustus and Eurydice,
My life's engag'd, I'll guard them in the fane,
Till the dark mysteries of hell are done.

Follow me, princes. Thebans, all to rest.

O, OEdipus, to-morrow—but no more.

If that thy wakesul genius will permit,
Indulge thy brain this night with softer slumbers :
To-morrow, O to-morrow !—sleep, my son ;
And in prophetic dreams thy fate be shewn.

[*Exit* *Tir.* *Adr.* *Eur.* *Man.* and *Thebans*.]

OEdip. To bed, my fair, my dear, my best Jocasta.
After the toils of war, 'tis wondrous strange
Our loves should thus be dash'd. One moment's thought,
And I'll approach the arms of my belov'd.

Joc. Consume whole years in care, so now and then
I may have leave to feed my famish'd eyes
With one short passing glance, and sigh my vows :
This and no more, my Lord, is all the passion
Of languishing Jocasta.

OEdip. Thou softest, sweetest of the world ! good night. [*Exit*.]

Nay, she is beauteous too ; yet, mighty love !
 I never offer'd to obey thy laws,
 But an unusual chilnes came upon me ;
 An unknown hand still check'd my forward joy,
 Dash'd me with blushes, tho' no light was near ;
 That even the act became a violation.

Pyr. He's strangely thoughtful.

OEdip. Hark ! who was that ! Ha ! Creon, didst thou
Cre. Not I, my gracious Lord, nor any here. [call me ?

OEdip. That's strange ! methought I heard a doleful
 Cry OEdipus—The prophet bad me sleep. [voice
 He talk'd of dreams, of visions, and to-morrow !
 I'll muse no more, come what will or can,
 My thoughts are clearer than unclouded stars ;
 And with those thoughts I'll rest. Creon, good night.

[Exit with Hæm.

Cre. Sleep seal your eyes up, Sir, eternal sleep.
 But if he sleep and wake again, O all
 Tormenting dreams, wild horrors of the night,
 And hags of fancy, wing him through the air :
 From precipices hurl him headlong down ;
 Charybd's roar, and death be set before him.

Alc. Your curses have already ta'en effect ;
 For he looks very sad.

Cre. May he be rooted where he stands for ever ;
 His eye-balls never move, brows be unbent,
 His blood, his entrails, liver, heart and bowels,
 Be blacker than the place I wish him, hell.

Pyr. No more ; you tear yourself, but vex not him.
 Methinks 'twere brave this night to force the temple,
 While blind Tiresias conjures up the fiends,
 And pass the time with nice Eurydice.

Alc. Try promises and threats, and if all fail,
 Since hell's broke loose, why should not you be mad ?
 Ravish, and leave her dead with her Adraustus.

Cre. Were the globe mine, I'd give a province hourly
 For such another thought. Lust and revenge !
 To stab at once the only man I hate,
 And to enjoy the woman whom I love !
 I ask no more of my auspicious stars,

The rest as Fortune please ; so but this night
She play me fair, why, let her turn for ever.

Enter Hæmon.

Hæm. My Lord, the troubled king is gone to rest ;
Yet, ere he slept, commanded me to clear
The antichambers : none must dare be near him.

Cre. Hæmon, you do your duty — [Thunder.]
And we obey.—The night grows yet more dreadful !
'Tis just that all retire to their devotions ;
The gods are angry : but to-morrow's dawn,
If prophets do not lie, will make all clear.

*As they go off, OEdipus enters, walking asleep in his shirt,
with a dagger in his right-hand, and a taper in his left.*

OEdip. O, my Jocasta ! 'tis for this the wet
Starv'd soldier lies on the cold ground ;
For this he bears the storms
Of winter camps, and freezes in his arms :
To be thus circled, to be thus embrac'd ;
That I cou'd hold thee ever ! — Ha ! where art thou ?
What means this melancholy light, that seems
The gloom of glowing embers ?
The curtain's drawn ; and see she's here again !
Jocasta ! Ha ! what, fall'n asleep so soon ?
How fares my love ? This taper will inform me.
Ha ! lightning blast me, thunder
Rivet me ever to Prometheus' rock,
And vultures gnaw out my incestuous heart.
By all the gods, my mother Merope !
My sword, a dagger ! Ha, who waits there ? Slaves,
My sword. What, Hæmon, dar'st thou, villain, stop me ?
With thy own poignard perish. Ha ! who's this ?
Or is't a change of death ? By all my honours,
New murder ; thou hast slain old Polybus :
Incest and parricide, thy father's murdered !
Out, thou infernal flame : now all is dark,
All blind and dism'd, most triumphant mischief !
And now, while thus I stalk about the room,
I challenge fate to find another wretch
Like OEdipus ! [Thunder, &c.]

Enter Jocasta attended, with lights, in a night-gown.
Night, horror, death, confusion, hell, and furies !
Where am I ? O, Jocasta, let me hold thee :

Thus

Thus to my bosom, ages let me grasp me,
All that the hardest temper'd weather'd flesh,
With fiercest human spirit inspir'd, can dare,
Or do, I dare; but, O you pow'rs, this was
By infinite degrees too much for man.

Methinks my deafen'd ears
Are burst; my eyes, as if they had been knock'd
By some tempestuous hand, shoot flashing fire:
That sleep should do this!

Joc. Then my fears were true.
Methought I heard your voice, and yet I doubted,
Now roaring like the ocean, when the winds
Fight with the waves; now, in a still small tone
Your dying accents fell, as racking ships,
After the dreadful yell, sink murmur'ring down,
And bubble up a noise.

OEdip. Trust me, thou fairest, best of all thy kind,
None e'er in dreams was tortur'd so before.
Yet what most shocks the nice ness of my temper,
Ev'n far beyond the killing of my father,
And my own death, is that this horrid sleep
Dash'd my sick fancy with an act of incest:
I dream'd, Jocasta, that thou wert my mother;
Which tho' impossible, so damps my spirits,
That I could do a mischief on myself,
Lest I should sleep and dream the like again.

Joc. O, OEdipus, too well I understand you!
I know the wrath of heav'n, the care of Thebes,
The cries of its inhabitants, war's toils,
And thousand other labours of the state,
Are all refer'd to you, and ought to take you
For ever from Jocasta.

OEdip. Life of my life, and treasure of my soul,
Heav'n knows I love thee.

Joc. O, you think me vile,
And of an inclination so ignoble,
That I must hide me from your eyes for ever.
Be witness, gods, and strike Jocasta dead,
If an immodest thought, or low desire
Inflain'd my breast, since first our loves were lighted.

OEdip. O rise, and add not, by thy cruel kindness,
A grief more sensible than all my torments.

Thou

Thou think'st my dreams are forg'd ; but by thyself,
 The greatest oath I swear, they are most true :
 But, be they what they will, I here dismiss them ;
 Begone, chimæras, to your mother clouds.
 Is there a fault in us ? Have we not search'd
 The womb of Heav'n, examin'd all the entrails
 Of birds and beasts, and tired the prophet's art ?
 Yet what avails ? He, and the gods together,
 Seem like physicians at a loss to help us ;
 Therefore, like wretches that have linger'd long,
 We'll snatch the strongest cordial of our love.—
 To bed, my fair.

Ghost within. OEdipus !

OEdip. Ha ! who calls ?

Didst thou not hear a voice ?

Joc. Alas ! I did.

Ghost. Jocasta !

Joc. O, my love, my Lord, support me !

OEdip. Call louder, till you burst your airy forms :
 Rest on my hand. Thus, arm'd with innocence,
 I'll face these babbling daemons of the air :
 In spight of ghosts, I'll on,
 Tho' round my bed the furies plant their charms ;
 I'll break them with Jocasta in my arms ;
 Clasp'd in the folds of love, I'll wait my doom,
 And act my joys, tho' thunder shake the room.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *a dark Grove.*

Enter Creon and Diocles.

CREON.

T IS better not to be, than be unhappy.

Dioc. What mean you by these words ?

Cre. 'Tis better not to be, than to be Creon.

A thinking soul is punishment enough ;

But when 'tis great, like mine, and wretched too,
 Then every thought draws blood.

Dioc.

Dioc. You are not wretched.

Cre. I am : my soul's ill-married to my body ;
I would be young, be handsome, be belov'd :
Could I but breathe myself into Adrastus —

Dioc. You rave ; call home your thoughts.

Cre. I pr'ythee let my soul take air awhile ;
Were she in OEdipus, I were a king ;
Then I had kill'd a monster, gain'd a battle,
And had my rival pris'ner ; brave, brave actions :
Why have not I done these ?

Dioc. Your fortune hinder'd.

Cre. There's it. I have a soul to do them all :
But Fortune will have nothing done that's great
But by young handsome fools : body and brawn
Do all her work : Hercules was a fool,
And straight grew famous : a mad boist'rous fool :
Nay worse, a woman's fool.
Fool is the stuff, of which Heav'n makes a hero.

Dioc. A serpent ne'er becomes a flying dragon,
Till he has eat a serpent.

Cre. Goes it there ?
I understand thee ; I must kill Adrastus.

Dioc. Or not enjoy your mistress :
Eurydice and he are pris'ners here,
But will not long be so : this tell-tale ghost
Perhaps will clear them both.

Cre. Well ; 'tis resolv'd.

Dioc. The princess walks this way ;
You must not meet her
Till this be done.

Cre. I must.

Dioc. She hates your sight ;
And more since you accus'd her.

Cre. Urge it not.
I cannot stay to tell thee my design,
For she's too near.

Enter Eurydice.

How, Madam, were your thoughts employ'd ?

Eur. On death and thee.

Cre. Then they were not well sorted : life and me
Had been the better match.

Eur. No, I was thinking

On two the most detested things in nature :

And they are death and thee.

Cre. The thought of death to one near death is dreadful !

O 'tis a fearful thing to be no more.

Or if to be, to wander after death ;

To walk as spirits do, in brakes all day ;

And when the darkness comes, to glide in paths

That lead to graves ; and in the silent vault,

Where lies your own pale shroud, to hover o'er it,

Striving to enter your forbidden corps :

And often, often, vainly breathe your ghost

Into your lifeless lips :

Then, like a lone benighted traveller

Shut out from lodging, shall your groans be answer'd

By whistling winds, whose every blast will shake

Your tender form to atoms.

Eur. Must I be this thin being, and thus wander
No quiet after death ?

Cre. None : you must leave

This beauteous body ; all this youth and freshness

Must be no more the object of desire,

But a cold lump of clay ;

Which then your discontented ghost will leave,

And loath its former lodging.

This is the best of what comes after death,

Ev'n to the best.

Eur. What then shall be thy lot !

Eternal torments, baths of boiling sulphur ;

Vicissitudes of fires, and then of frosts :

And an old guardian fiend, ugly as thou art,

To hollow in thy ears at every lash ;

This for Eurydice ; these for her Adraustus !

Cre. For her Adraustus !

Eur. Yes, for her Adraustus ;

For death shall ne'er divide us. Death ! what's death ?

Dioc. You seem'd to fear it.

Eur. But I more fear Creon :

To take that hunch-back'd monster in my arms,

Th' excrescence of a man.

Dioc. [To Cre.] See what you've gain'd.

Enr. Death only can be dreadful to the bad :

To innocence, 'tis like a bug-bear dress'd

To

‘ To frighten children ; pull but off his mask,
‘ And he’ll appear a friend.’

Cre. You talk too slightly
Of death and hell. Let me inform you better.

Eur. You best can tell the news of your own country.

Dioc. Nay, now you are too sharp.

Eur. Can I be so to one who has accus’d me
Of murder and of parricide ?

Cre. You provok’d me :

And yet I only did thus far accuse you,
As next of blood to Laius : be advis’d,
And you may live.

Eur. The means ?

Cre. ’Tis offer’d you ;
The fool Adrastus has accus’d himself.

Eur. He has indeed, to take the guilt from me.

Cre. He says he loves you ; if he does, ’tis well :
He ne’er could prove it in a better time.

Eur. Then death must be his recompence for love !

Cre. ’Tis a fool’s just reward :
The wife can make a better use of life :
But ’tis the young man’s pleasure ; his ambition :
I grudge him not that favour.

Eur. When he’s dead,
Where shall I find his equal ?

Cre. Every where.
Fine empty things, like him,
The court swarms with them.
Fine fighting things ; in camps they are so common,
Crows feed on nothing else ; plenty of fools ;
A glut of them in Thebes.
And Fortune still takes care they should be seen :
She places them aloft, o’ th’ topmost spoke
Of all her wheel : fools are the daily work
Of Nature ; her vocation ; if she form
A man, she loses by’t, ’tis too expensive ;
’Twould make ten fools : a man’s a prodigy.

Eur. That is, a Creon : O thou black detractor,
‘ Who spitt’st thy venom against gods and men !
‘ Thou enemy of eyes :’
Thou who lov’st nothing but what nothing loves,
And that’s thyself : who hast conspir’d against

My life and fame, to make me loath'd by all,
And only fit for thee.

But for AdraSTUS' death, good gods, his death !
What curse shall I invent ?

Dioc. No more—he's here.

Eur. He shall be ever here.

He who would give his life, give up his fame—

Enter AdraSTUS.

If all the excellence of woman-kind

Were mine—No, 'tis too little all for him :

Were I made up of endless, endless joys—

Adr. And so thou art :

The man who loves like me,

Would think ev'n infamy, the worst of ills,

Were cheaply purchas'd, were thy love the price.

Uncrown'd, a captive, nothing left but honour,

'Tis the last thing a prince should throw away :

But when the storm grows loud, and threatens love,

Throw ev'n that over-board ; for love's the jewel,

And last it must be kept.

Cre. [To Dioc.] Work him, be sure,

To rage—He's passionate ;

Make him th' aggressor.

Dioc. Oh, false love ! false honour !

Cre. Dissembled both, and false !

Adr. Dar'st thou say this to me ?

Cre. To you ! why, what are you, that I should fear

I am not Laius. Hear me, Prince of Argos. [you ?

You give what's nothing, when you give your honour ;

'Tis gone, 'tis lost in battle. For your love,

Vows made in wine are not so false as that :

You kill'd her father ; you confess'd you did :

A mighty argument to prove your passion to the daughter !

Adr. [Aside.] Gods, must I bear this brand, and not
The lie to his foul throat ! [retort

Dioc. Basely you kill'd him.

Adr. [Aside.] Oh, I burn inward ! my blood's all o'fire !

Alcides, when the poison'd shirt fate closest,

Had but an ague-fit to this my fever.

Yet, for Eurydice, ev'n this I'll suffer,

To free my love—Well, then, I kill'd him basely.

Cre. Fairly, I'm sure, you could not.

Dioc. Nor alone.

Cre. You had your fellow thieves about you, Prince :
They conquer'd, and you kill'd.

Adr. [Aside.] Down, swelling heart !

'Tis for thy princess, all—Oh, my Euridice !— [To her.]

Eur. [To him.] Reproach not thus the weakness of my
As if I could not bear a shameful death, [sex,
Rather than see you burden'd with a crime
Of which I know you free.

Cre. You do ill, Madam,
To let your headlong love triumph o'er nature.
Dare you defend your father's murderer ?

Eur. You know he kill'd him not.

Cre. Let him say so.

Dioc. See, he stands mute.

Cre. Oh, pow'r of conscience ! ev'n in wicked men
It works, it stings, it will not let him utter
One syllable, one No, to clear himself
From the most base, detested, horrid act,
That e'er could stain a villain, not a prince.

Adr. Ha ! villain !

Cre. Echo to him, groves, cry villain.

Adr. Let me consider—Did I murder Laius,
Thus like a villain ?

Cre. Best revoke your words,
And say, you kill'd him not.

Adr. Not like a villain ; pr'ythee, change me that
For any other lie.

Dioc. No, villain, villain.

Cre. You kill'd him not—Proclaim your innocence,
Accuse the Princess : so I knew 'twould be.

Adr. I thank thee ; thou instruct'st me.
No matter how I kill'd him.

Cre. [Aside.] Cool'd again !

Eur. Thou, who usurp'st the sacred name of conscience,
Did not thy own self declare him innocent ?
To me declare him so ? The King shall know it.

Cre. You will not be believ'd ; for I'll forswear it.

Eur. What's now thy conscience ?

Cre. 'Tis my slave, my drudge, my supple glove,
My upper garment, to put on, throw off,
As I think best : 'tis my obedient conscience.

Adr.

Adr. Infamous wretch !

Cre. My conscience shall not do me the ill office
To save a rival's life ; when thou art dead,
(As dead thou shalt be, or be yet more base
Than thou think'st me,
By forfeiting her life, to save thy own.)
Know this, and let it grate thy very soul,
She shall be mine : (she is, if vows were binding)
Mark me, the fruit of all thy faith and passion,
Ev'n of thy foolish death, shall all be mine.

Adr. Thine, say'st thou, monster ?

Shall my love be thine ?

Oh, I can bear no more !

Thy cunning engines have with labour rais'd
My heavy anger, like a mighty weight,
To fall and strike thee dead.

See here thy nuptials ; see, thou rash Ixion, [Draws.]
Thy promis'd Juno vanish'd in a cloud,
And in her room avenging thunder rolls

To blast thee thus — Come both —

[Both draw.

Cre. 'Tis what I wish'd —

Now see whose arm can launch the surer bolt,
And who's the better Jove —

[Fight.

Eur. Help, murder, help !

Enter Hæmon and Guards, run betwixt them, and beat
down their swords.

Hæm. Hold, hold your impious hands ! I think the Furies,
To whom this grove is hallow'd, have inspir'd you.
Now, by my soul, the holiest earth of Thebes
You have profan'd with war. Nor tree, nor plant
Grows here, but what is fed with magic juice,
All full of human souls, that cleave their barks,
To dance at midnight by the moon's pale beams.
At least two hundred years these reverend shades
Have known no blood, but of black sheep and oxen,
Shed by the priest's own hand to Proserpine.

Adr. Forgive a stranger's ignorance — I knew not
The honours of the place.

Hæm. Thou, Creon, didst.

Not OEdipus, were all his foes here lodg'd,
Durst violate the religion of these groves,
To touch one single hair ; but must, unarm'd,

Parle, as in truce, or surlily avoid.
What most he long'd to kill..

Cre. I drew not first ;
But in my own defence..

Adr. I was provok'd
Beyond man's patience ; all reproach could urge
Was us'd to kindle one not apt to bear.

Hæm. 'Tis OEdipus, not I, must judge this act.
Lord Creon, you and Diocles retire ;
Tiresias and the brotherhood of priests
Approach the place. None at these rites assist,
But you th' accus'd, who by the mouth of Laius
Must be absolv'd or doom'd.

Adr. I bear my fortune.

Eur. And I provoke my trial.

Hæm. 'Tis at hand :
For see, the prophet comes with vervain crown'd,
The priests with yew ; a venerable band.
We leave you to the gods.

[Exit Hænon, with Creon and Diocles.
Enter Tiresias, led by Manto ; the priests follow, all cloathed
in long black habits.

Tir. Approach, ye lovers ;
Ill-fated pair, whom, seeing not, I know.
This day your kindly stars in heav'n were join'd ;
When lo, an envious planet interpos'd,
And threaten'd both with death. I fear, I fear.

Eur. Is there no god so much a friend to love,
Who can controul the malice of our fate ?
Are they all deaf ? Or have the giants heav'n ?

Tir. The gods are just —
But how can finite measure infinite ?
Reason ! alas, it does not know itself !
Yet man, vain man, would, with this short-lin'd plummet,
Fathom the vast abyss of heav'nly justice.
Whatever is, is in its causes just ;
Since all things are by fate. But purblind man
Sees but a part o' th' chain ; the nearest links ;
His eyes not carrying to that equal beam
That poises all above.

Eur. Then we must die !

Tir. The danger's imminent this day.

Adr.

Adr. ' Why then there's one day less for human ills ;
 ' And who would moan himself for suffering that
 ' Which in a day must pass ? Something or nothing :
 ' I shall be what I was again, before
 ' I was Adrastus.'

Penurious Heav'n ! canst thou not add a night
 To our one day ? Give me a night with her,
 And I'll give all the rest.

Tir. She broke her vow

First made to Creon. But the time calls on ;
 And Laius' death must now be made more plain.
 How loth I am to have recourse to rites
 So full of horror, that I once rejoice
 I want the use of sight.

1 Pr. The cremonies stay.

Tir. Choose the darkest part o' th' grove,
 Such as ghosts at noon-day love.
 Dig a trench, and dig it nigh
 Where the bones of Laius lie,
 Altars rais'd of turf or stone,
 Will th' infernal pow'rs have none.
 Answer me if this be done ?

All Pr. 'Tis done.

Tir. Is the sacrifice made fit ?
 Draw her backward to the pit ;
 Draw the barren heifer back ;
 Barren let her be, and black.
 Cut the curled hair that grows
 Full betwixt her horns and brows ;
 And turn your faces from the sun ;
 Answer me if this be done ?

All Pr. 'Tis done.

Tir. Pour in blood, and blood like wine,
 To mother Earth and Proserpine ;
 Mingle milk into the stream ;
 Feast the ghosts that love the steam ;
 Snatch a brand from funeral pile,
 Toss it in, to make them boil ;
 And turn your faces from the sun ;
 Answer me, if all be done ?

All Pr. All is done.

[Peals of thunder and flashes of lightning ; then groaning
 below the stage.]

Man. Oh, what laments are those? [pain,

Tir. The groans of ghosts that cleave the earth with
And heave it up; they pant and stick half way.

[The stage wholly darkened.]

Man. And now a sudden darkness covers all;
True, genuine night; night added to the groves;
The fogs are blown full in the face of heav'n.

Tir. Am I but half obey'd? Infernal gods,
Must you have music too? Then tune your voices,
And let them have such sounds as hell ne'er heard.
Since Orpheus brib'd the shades.

[Music first, then sing.]

- 1. Hear, ye sullen pow'rs below;
- ‘ Hear, ye taskers of the dead :
- 2. You that boiling cauldrons blow,
- ‘ You that scum the molten lead.
- 3. You that pinch with red-hot tongs :
- 1. You that drive the trembling hosts,
- ‘ Of poor, poor ghosts,
- ‘ With your sharpen'd prongs.
- 2. You that thrust them off the brim.
- 3. You that plunge them when they swim,
- 1. Till they drown,
- ‘ Till they go,
- ‘ On a row,
- ‘ Down, down, down;
- ‘ Ten thousand, thousand, thousand fathoms low.
- *Chorus.* Till they drown, &c.
- 1. Music for a while :
- ‘ Shall your cares beguile,
- ‘ Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd;
- 2. And disdaining to be pleas'd,
- 3. Till Alecto free the dead
- ‘ From their eternal bands;
- Till the snakes drop from her head,
- ‘ And whip from out her hands.
- 1. Come away,
- ‘ Do not stay,
- ‘ But obey,
- ‘ While we play,
- ‘ For hell's broke up, and ghosts have holiday.
- *Chorus.* Come away, &c.

‘ [A flash of lightning : the stage is made bright, and the
 ghosts are seen passing betwixt the trees.
 ‘ 1. Laius ! 2. Laius ! 3. Laius !
 ‘ 1. Hear ! 2. Hear ! 3. Hear !
 ‘ Tir. Hear and appear.
 ‘ By the Fates that spun thy thread,
 ‘ Cho. Which are three,
 ‘ Tir. By the furies fierce and dread,
 ‘ Cho. Which are three.
 ‘ Tir. By the Judges of the dead,
 ‘ Cho. Which are three.
 ‘ Three times three.
 ‘ Tir. By Hell’s blue flame ;
 ‘ By the Stygian lake ;
 ‘ And by Demogorgon’s name,
 ‘ At which ghosts quake,
 ‘ Hear and appear ?’

{The ghost of Laius rises, armed in his chariot, as he was slain ; and behind his chariot sit the three who were murdered with him.

Ghost of Laius. Why hast thou drawn me from my pains
 To suffer worse above ; to see the day, [below,
 And Thebes more hated ? Hell is heav’n to Thebes.
 For pity, send me back, where I may hide,
 In willing night, this ignominious head.
 In hell I shun the public scorn ; and then
 They hunt me for their sport, and hoot me as I fly :
 Behold, ev’n now, they grin at my gor’d side,
 And chatter at my wounds.

Tir. I pity thee.

Tell but why Thebes is for thy death accrû’d,
 And I’ll unbind the charm.

Ghost. Oh, spare my shame !

Tir. Are these two innocent ?

Ghost. Of my death they are.

But he who holds my crown, Oh, must I speak !
 Was doom’d to do what nature most abhors.
 The gods forefaw it, and forbade his being
 Before he yet was born. I broke their laws,
 And cloth’d with flesh his pre-existing soul.
 Some kinder pow’r, too weak for destiny,

Took pity, and indu'd his new-form'd mass
 With temperance, justice, prudence, fortitude,
 And every kingly virtue. But in vain ;
 For Fate, that sent him hoodwink'd to the world,
 Perform'd its work by his mistaken hands.
 Ask'st thou who murder'd me ? 'Twas OEdipus.
 Who stains my bed with incest ? OEdipus.
 For whom then are you curs'd, but OEdipus ?
 He comes ! the parricide ! I cannot bear him !
 My wounds ake at him ! Oh, his murd'rous breath
 Venoms my airy substance ! Hence with him,
 Banish him, sweep him out ; the plagues he bears
 Will blast your fields, and mark his way with ruin.
 From Thebes, my throne, my bed, let him be driven ;
 Do you forbid him earth, and I'll forbid him heav'n.

[Ghost descends.]

Enter OEdipus, Creon, Hæmon, &c.

OEdip. What's this ? Methought some pestilential blast
 Struck me just entering ; and some unseen hand
 Struggled to push me backward. Tell me why
 My hair stands bristling up, why my flesh trembles ?
 You stare at me ! Then hell has been among ye,
 And some lag fiend yet lingers in the grove.

Tir. What omen saw'st thou, ent'ring ?

OEdip. A young stork,
 That bore his aged parent on his back,
 Till, weary with the weight, he shook him off,
 And peck'd out both his eyes.

Adr. Oh, OEdipus !

Eur. Oh, wretched OEdipus !

Tir. Oh, fatal king !

OEdip. What mean these exclamations on my name ?
 I thank the gods, no secret thoughts reproach me.
 ' No, I dare challenge Heav'n to turn me outward,
 ' And shake my soul quite empty in your sight.'
 Then wonder not that I can bear unmov'd
 These fix'd regards, and silent threats of eyes.
 A generous fierceness dwells with innocence ;
 And conscious virtue is allow'd some pride.

Tir. Thou know'st not what thou say'st.

OEdip. What mutters he ? Tell me, Euridice —
 Thou shak'st — thy soul's a woman. Speak, Adraustus,

And

And boldly, as thou met'it my arm in fight.
 Dar'st thou not speak? Why, then 'tis bad indeed.
 Tiresias, thee I summon by thy priesthood;
 Tell me what news from hell; where Laius points,
 And who's the guilty head?

Tir. Let me not answer.

OEdip. Be dumb, then, and betray thy native soil
 To farther plagues.

Tir. I dare not name him to thee.

OEdip. Dar'st thou converse with hell, and canst thou
 An human name? [fear

Tir. Urge me no more to tell a thing, which, known,
 Would make thee more unhappy. 'Twill be found,
 Tho' I am silent.

OEdip. Old and obstinate! Then thou thyself
 Art author or accomplice of this murder;
 And shun'st the justice, which, by public ban,
 Thou hast incurr'd.

Tir. Oh, if the guilt were mine,
 It were not half so great! Know, wretched man,
 Thou, only thou art guilty; thy own curse
 Falls heavy on thyself.

OEdip. Speak this again:
 But speak it to the winds when they are loudest,
 Or to the raging seas; they'll hear as soon,
 And sooner will believe.

Tir. Then hear me, Heav'n,
 For, blushing, thou hast seen it: hear me, Earth,
 Whose hollow womb could not contain this murder,
 But sent it back to light: and thou, Hell, hear me,
 Whose own black seal has 'firm'd this horrid truth:
OEdipus murder'd Laius.

OEdip. Rot the tongue,
 And blasted be the mouth that spoke that lie.
 Thou blind of sight, but thou more blind of soul—

Tir. Thy parents thought not so.

OEdip. Who were my parents?

Tir. Thou shalt know too soon.

OEdip. Why seek I truth from thee?
 The smiles of courtiers, and the harlot's tears,
 The tradesman's oaths, and mourning of an heir,
 Are truths to what priests tell.

Ob,

Oh, why has priesthood privilege to lie,
And yet to be believ'd !—Thy age protects thee—

Tir. Thou canst not kill me ; 'tis not in thy fate,
As 'twas to kill thy father, wed thy mother,
And beget sons, thy brothers.

OEdip. Riddles, riddles !

Tir. Thou art thyself a riddle, a perplex'd,
Obscure ænigma, which, when thou unty'st,
Thou shalt be found and lost.

OEd. Impossible !

Adraustus, speak ; and, as thou art a king,
Whose royal word is sacred, clear my faine.

Adr. Would I could !

OEdip. Ha ! wilt thou not ? Can that plebeian vice
Of lying mount to kings ? Can they be tainted ?
Then truth is lost on earth.

Cre. The cheat's too grofs.

Adraustus is his oracle, and he,
The pious juggler, but Adraustus' organ.

OEdip. 'Tis plain ; the priest's suborn'd to free the
Cre. And turn the guilt on you. [pris'ner.

OEdip. Oh, honest Creon, how hast thou been bely'd !
Eur. Hear me.

Cre. She's brib'd to save her lover's life.

Adr. If, OEdipus, thou think'st —

Cre. Hear him not speak.

Adr. Then hear these holy men.

Cre. Priests, priests, all brib'd, all priests !

OEdip. Adraustus, I have found thee :
The malice of a vanquish'd man has seiz'd thee.

Adr. If envy, and not truth —

OEdip. I'll hear no more : away with him.

[Hæmon takes him off by force ; Creon and Eurydice follow.

[To Tir.] Why stand'st thou here, impostor ?

So old and yet so wicked !—Lie for gain,

And gain so short as age can promise thee !

Tir. So short a time as I have yet to live
Exceeds thy pointed hour. Remember Laius—
No more—if e'er we meet again, 'twill be
In mutual darkness ; we shall feel before us,
To reach each other's hand—Remember Laius.

[Exit Tiresias ; Priests follow.
Remember

OEdip. Remember Laius ! that's the burden still.
 Murder and incest ! But to hear them nam'd
 My soul starts in me : ' the good sentinel
 ' Stands to his weapons, takes the first alarm,
 ' To guard me from such crimes.' Did I kill Laius ?
 Then I walk'd sleeping, in some frightful dream ;
 My soul then stole my body out by night,
 And brought me back to bed ere morning-wake.
 It cannot be, ev'n this remotest way ;
 But some dark hint would jostle forward now,
 And goad my memory—Oh, my Jocasta !

Enter Jocasta.

Joc. Why are you thus disturb'd ?

OEdip. Why, wouldst thou think it ?
 No less than murder.

Joc. Murder ! what of murder ?

OEdip. Is murder then no more ? Add parricide
 And incest—bear not these a frightful sound ?

Joc. Alas !

OEdip. How poor a pity is alas,
 For two such crimes !—Was Laius us'd to lie ?

Joc. Oh, no ! the most sincere, plain, honest man ;
 One who abhor'd a lie.

OEdip. Then he has got that quality in hell.
 He charges me—but why accuse I him ?
 I did not hear him speak it. They accuse me,
 The Priest, Adraustus, and Eurydice,
 Of murdering Laius—Tell me, while I think on't,
 Has old Tiresias practis'd long this trade ?

Joc. What trade ?

OEdip. Why, this foretelling trade.

Joc. For many years.

OEdip. Has he before this day accus'd me ?

Joc. Never.

OEdip. Have you, ere this, enquir'd who did this mur-
 Joc. Often ; but still in vain. [der ?

OEdip. I am satisfy'd.

Then 'tis an infant-lie ; but one day old.
 The oracle takes place before the priest ;
 The blood of Laius was to murder Laius :
 I'm not of Laius' blood.

Joc.

Joc. Ev'n oracles.

Are always doubtful, and are often forg'd :
Laius had one, which never was fulfill'd,
Nor ever can be now.

OEdip. And what foretold it ?

Joc. That he should have a son by me, fore-doom'd
The murderer of his father. True, indeed,
A son was born; but, to prevent that crime,
The wretched infant of a guilty fate,
Bor'd through his untry'd feet, and bound with cords,
On a bleak mountain naked was expos'd.
The King himself liv'd many, many years,
And found a different fate ; by robbers murder'd,
Where three ways meet. Yet these are oracles ;
And this the faith we owe them.

OEdip. Say'st thou, woman ?
By Heav'n, thou hast awaken'd somewhat in me,
That shakes my very soul !

Joc. What new disturbance ? —

OEdip. Methought thou said'st, or do I dream thou
This murder was on Laius' person done [said'st it ?
Where three ways meet.

Joc. So common fame reports.

OEdip. Would it had lied !

Joc. Why, good my Lord ?

OEdip. No questions.

'Tis busy time with me ; dispatch mine first.
Say, where, where was it done ?

Joc. Mean you the murder ?

OEdip. Couldst thou not answer without naming murder ?

Joc. They say in Phocide ; on the verge that parts it
From Dalia, and from Delphos.

OEdip. So — How long ? When happen'd this ?

Joc. Some little time before you came to Thebes.

OEdip. What will the gods do with me ?

Joc. What means that thought ?

OEdip. Something — But 'tis not yet your turn to ask.
How old was Laius, what his shape, his stature,
His action, and his mien ? Quick, quick, your answer —

Joc. Big made he was, and tall ; his port was fierce,
Erect his countenance ; manly majesty
Sate in his front, and darted from his eyes,

Commanding all he viewed ; his hair just grizzled,
As in a green old age. Bate but his years,
You are his picture.

OEdip. [Aside.] Pray Heav'n he drew me not ! Am I
Joc. So I have often told you. [his picture ?

OEdip. True, you have :
Add that unto the rest. How was the King
Attended when he travell'd ?

Joc. By four servants.
He went out privately.

OEdip. Well counted still !
One 'scap'd, I hear. What since became of him ?

Joc. When he beheld you first, as King in Thebes,
He kneel'd, and, trembling, begg'd I would dismiss him.
He had my leave ; and now he lives retir'd.

OEdip. This man must be produc'd ; he must, Jocasta.

Joc. He shall—Yet have I leave to ask you why ?
OEdip. Yes, you shall know ; for where should I repose
The anguish of my soul, but in your breast ?
I need not tell you Corinth claims my birth ;
My parents, Polybus and Merope,
Two royal names ; their only child am I.
It happen'd once, 'twas at a bridal feast,
One, warm with wine, told me I was a foundling,
Not the King's son : I, stung with this reproach,
Struck him ; my father heard of it ; the man
Was made ask pardon, and the business hush'd.

Joc. 'Twas somewhat odd.

OEdip. And strangely it perplex'd me.
I stole away to Delphos, and implor'd
The god, to tell my certain parentage.
He bade me seek no farther ; 'twas my fate
To kill my father, and pollute his bed,
By marrying her who bore me.

Joc. Vain, vain oracles !

OEdip. But yet they frightened me.
I look'd on Corinth as a place accurs'd ;
Resolv'd my destiny should wait in vain,
And never catch me there.

Joc. Too nice a fear.

OEdip. Suspend your thoughts, and flatter not too soon.
Just in the place you nam'd, where three ways meet,

And near that time, five persons I encounter'd ;
 One was too like (Heav'n grant it prove not him !)
 The person you describe for Laius : insolent
 And fierce they were, as men who liv'd on spoil ;
 I judg'd them robbers, and by force repell'd
 The force they us'd. In short, four men I slew ;
 The fifth, upon his knees, demanding life,
 My mercy gave it—Bring me comfort now !
 If I slew Laius, what can be more wretched ?
 From Thebes and you my curse has banish'd me ;
 From Corinth, Fate.

Joc. Perplex not thus your mind.
 My husband fell by multitudes oppress'd ;
 So Phorbas said. This band you chanc'd to meet ;
 And murder'd not my Laius, but reveng'd him.

OEd. There's all my hope : let Phorbas tell me this,
 And I shall live again.
 To you, good gods, I make my last appeal ;
 Or clear my virtue, or my crime reveal.
 If wandering in the maze of fate I run,
 And backward trod the paths I sought to shun,
 Impute my errors to your own decree ;
 My hands are guilty, but my heart is free.

[Exeunt.]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A. C T IV.

Enter Pyracmon and Creon.

PYRACMON.

SOME business of import, that triumph wears,
 You seem to go with ; nor is it hard to guess
 When you are pleas'd, ' by a malicious joy,
 ' Whose red and fiery beams cast through your visage
 ' A glowing pleasure. Sure' you smile revenge,
 And I could gladly hear.

Cre. Wouldst thou believe,
 This giddy, hair-brain'd King, whom old Tiresias
 Has thunderstruck with heavy accusation,
 Tho' conscious of no inward guilt, yet fears ?

He

He fears Jocasta, fears himself, his shadow;
 He fears the multitude; and, which is worth
 An age of laughter, out of all mankind,
 He chuses me to be his orator:
 Swears that Adraustus and the lean-look'd prophet
 Are joint conspirators; and wish'd me to
 Appear the raving Thebans; which I swore
 To do.

Pyr. A dangerous undertaking;
 Directly opposite to your own interest.

Cre. No, dull Pyracmon; when I left his presence,
 With all the wings with which revenge could imp-
 My flight, I gain'd the midst o' the city;
 There, standing on a pile of dead and dying,
 I to the mad and sickly multitude,
 With interrupting sobs, cry'd out, Oh, Thebes!
 Oh, wretched Thebes, thy king, thy OEdipus,
 This barbarous stranger, this usurper, monster,
 Is by the oracle, the wife Tirefias,
 Proclaim'd the murderer of thy royal Laius!
 Jocasta, too, no longer now my sister,
 Is found complotter in the horrid deed.
 Here I renounce all tie of blood and nature,
 For thee, Oh, Thebes, dear Thebes, poor bleeding Thebes!
 And there I wept; and then the rabble howl'd,
 And roar'd, and with a thousand antic mouths,
 Gabbled revenge; revenge was all the cry.

Pyr. This cannot fail; I see you on the throne,
 And OEdipus cast out.

Cre. Then straight came on
 Alcander, with a wide and bellowing crowd,
 Whom he had wrought; I whisper'd him to join,
 And head the forces while the heat was in them.
 So, to the palace I return'd, to meet
 The King, and greet him with another story.
 But see, he enters.

Enter OEdipus and Jocasta, attended.

OEdip. Said you that Phorbas is arriv'd, and yet
 Intreats he may return, without being ask'd
 Of ought concerning what we have discover'd?

Joc. He started when I told him your intent;
 Replying, what he knew of that affair

Would give no satisfaction to the King ;
 Then, falling on his knees, begg'd as for life,
 To be dismiss'd from court : he trembled too,
 As if convulsive death had seiz'd upon him,
 And stammer'd in his abrupt pray'r so wildly,
 That had he been the murderer of Laius,
 Guilt and distraction could not have shook him more.

OEdip. By your description, sure as plagues and death
 Lay waste our Thebes, some deed that shuns the light
 Begot those fears ; if thou respect' st my peace,
 Secure him, dear Jocasta ; for my genius
 Shrinks at his name.

Joc. Rather let him go ;
 So my poor boding heart would have it be,
 Without a reason.

OEdip. Hark, the Thebans come !
 Therefore retire : and once more, if thou lov' st me,
 Let Phorbas be retain'd.

Joc. You shall, while I
 Have life, be still obey'd :
 In vain you sooth me with your soft endearments,
 And set the fairest countenance to view ;
 Your gloomy eyes, my Lord, betray a deadness
 And inward languishing : that oracle
 Eats like a subtle worm its venom'd way,
 Preys on your heart, and rots the noble core,
 Howe'er the beauteous out-side shews so lovely.

OEdip. Oh, thou wilt kill me with thy love's excess !
 All, all is well ; retire, the Thebans come. [Ex. Joc.]

Ghost. OEdipus !

OEdip. Ha ! again that stream of woe !
 Thrice have I heard, thrice since the morning dawn'd
 It hallow'd loud, as if my guardian spirit
 Call'd from some vaulted mansion, OEdipus !
 Or is it but the work of melancholy ?
 When the sun sets, shadows, that shew'd at noon
 But small, appear most long and terrible ;
 So when we think Fate hovers o'er our heads,
 Our apprehensions shoot beyond all bounds,
 Owls, ravens, crickets, seem the watch of death,
 Nature's worst vermin scare her god-like sons ;
 Echoes, the very leavings of a voice,

Grow babbling ghosts, and call us to our graves :
 Each mole-hill thought swells to a huge Olympus,
 While we fantastic dreamers heave and puff,
 And sweat with an imagination's weight ;
 As if, like Atlas, with these mortal shoulders
 We could sustain the burden of the world.

[Creon comes forward.]

Cre. Oh, sacred Sir, my royal Lord.—

OEdip. What now ?

Thou seem'st affrighted at some dreadful action,
 Thy breath comes short, thy darted eyes are fix'd
 On me for aid, as if thou wert pursu'd :
 I sent thee to the Thebans : speak thy wonder ;
 Fear not, this palace is a sanctuary,
 The King himself's thy guard.

Cre. For me, alas !

My life's not worth a thought, when weigh'd with yours !
 But fly, my Lord : fly, as your life is sacred.
 Your fate is precious to your faithful Creon,
 Who therefore, on his knees, thus prostrate, begs
 You would remove from Thebes that vows your ruin.
 When I but offer'd at your innocence,
 They gather'd stones, and menac'd me with death,
 And drove me through the streets, with imprecations
 Against your sacred person, and those traitors
 Which justify'd your guilt : which curs'd Tirésias
 Told, as from heav'n, was cause of their destruction.

OEdip. Rise, worthy Creon, haste and take our guard,
 Rank them in equal part upon the square,
 Then open every gate of this our palace,
 And let the torrent in. Hark, it comes. [Shout.
 I hear them roar : begone, and break down all
 The dams that would oppose their furious passage.

[Exit Creon with Guards.]

Enter Adrastus, his Sword drawn.

Adr. Your city
 Is all in arms, all bent to your destruction ;
 I heard but now, where I was close confin'd,
 A thund'ring shout, which made my gaolers vanish,
 Cry, Fire the palace ; where's the cruel king ?
 Yet, by th' infernal gods, those awful pow'rs,
 That have accus'd you, which these ears have heard,

And these eyes seen, I must believe you guiltless ;
 For, since I knew the royal OEdipus,
 I have observ'd in all his acts such truth
 And god-like clearness ; that to the last gush
 Of blood and spirits, I'll defend his life,
 And here have sworn to perish by his side.

OEdip. Be witness, gods, how near this touches me.

[Embracing him.]

Oh, what, what recompence can glory make ?

Adr. Defend your innocence, speak like yourself,
 And awe the rebels with your dauntless virtue.
 But hark ! the storm comes nearer.

OEdip. Let it come.

The force of majesty is never known
 But in a general wrack : then, then is seen
 The difference 'twixt a threshold and a throne,

Enter Creon, Pyracmon, Alcander, Tirefias, Thebans.

Alc. Where, where's this cruel king ? Thebans, behold
 There stands your plague, the ruin, desolation
 Of this unhappy —— Speak ; shall I kill him ?
 Or shall he be cast out to banishment ?

All Theb. To banishment, away with him.

OEdip. Hence, you barbarians, to your slavish distance !
 Fix to the earth your sordid looks ; for he
 Who stirs, dares more than mad-men, fiends, or furies.
 • Who dares to face me, by the gods, as well
 • May brave the majesty of thundering Jove.
 Did I for this relieve you when besieg'd
 By this fierce prince, when coop'd within your walls,
 And to the very brink of Fate reduc'd ?
 When lean-jaw'd famine made more havock of you,
 Than does the plague ? But I rejoice I know you,
 Know the base stuff that temper'd your vile souls :
 The gods be prais'd, I needed not your empire,
 Born to a greater, nobler, of my own ;
 Nor shall the scepter of the earth now win me
 To rule such brutes, so barbarous a people.

Adr. Methinks, my Lord, I see a sad repentance,
 A general consternation spread among them.

OEdip. My reign is at an end ; yet ere I finish—
 I'll do a justice that becomes a monarch,

A mo-

A monarch, who, i'th' midst of swords and javelins
 Dares act as on his throne encompasst round
 With nations for his guard. Alcander, you
 Are nobly born, therefore shall lose your head :

[Seizes him.]

Here, Hæmon, take him ; but for this, and this,
 Let cords dispatch them. Hence, away with them.

Tir. Oh, sacred Prince, pardon distracted Thebes,
 Pardon her, if she acts by Heav'n's award ;
 ' If that th' infernal spirits have declar'd
 ' The depth of Fate, and if our oracles
 ' May speak, Oh, do not too severely deal,
 ' But let thy wretched Thebes at least complain :
 If thou art guilty, Heav'n will make it known :
 If innocent, then let Tiresias die.

OEdip. I take thee at thy word ; run, haste, and save
 I swear the prophet, or the King shall die. [Alcander :
 Be-witnes, all you Thebans, of my oath ;
 And Phorbas be the umpire.

Tir. I submit.

[Trumpets sound.]

OEdip. What mean those trumpets ?

Enter Hæmon, with Alcander, &c.

Hæm. From your native country,
 Great Sir, the fam'd Ægeon is arriv'd,
 That renown'd favourite of the King your father :
 He comes as an ambassador from Corinth,
 And sues for audience.

OEdip. Haste, Hæmon, fly, and tell him that I burn
 T' embrace him.

Hæm. The Queen, my Lord, at present holds him
 In private conference ; but behold her here.

Enter Jocasta, Eurydice, &c.

Joc. Hail, happy OEdipus, happiest of kings !
 Henceforth be blest, blest as thou canst desire,
 Sleep without fears the blackest nights away ;
 Let furies haunt thy palace, thou shalt sleep
 Secure, thy slumbers shall be soft and gentle
 As infant dreams.

OEdip. What does the soul of all my joys intend ?
 And whither would this rapture ?

Joc. Oh, I could rave,
 Pull down those lying fanes, and burn that vault,
 From whence resounded those false oracles,

That

That robb'd my love of rest: if we must pray,
 Rear in the streets bright altars to the gods,
 Let virgins heads adorn the sacrifice;
 And not a grey-beard forging priest come near,
 To pry into the bowels of the victim,
 And with his dotage mad the gaping world.
 But see, the oracle that I will trust,
 True as the gods, and affable as men.

Enter Ægeon. Kneels.

OEdip. Oh, to my arms, welcome, my dear Ægeon;
 Ten thousand welcomes, Oh, my foster father,
 Welcome as mercy to a man condemn'd!
 Welcome to me,
 As, to a sinking mariner,
 The lucky plank that bears him to the shore!
 But speak, Oh, tell me what so mighty joy
 Is this thou bring'st, which so transports Jocasta?

Joc. Peace, peace, Ægeon, let Jocasta tell him!
 Oh, that I could for ever charm, as now,
 My dearest OEdipus; thy royal father,
 Polybus, king of Corinth, is no more.

OEdip. Ha! can it be? Ægeon, answer me.
 And speak in short what my Jocasta's transport
 May over-do.

Æge. Since in few words, my royal Lord, you ask
 To know the truth; king Polybus is death.

OEdip. Oh, all you powers, is't possible? What dead?
 But that the tempest of my joy may rise
 By just degrees, and hit at last the stars:
 Say, how, how dy'd he? Ha! by sword, by fire,
 Or water? By assassinates, or poison? Speak:
 Or did he languish under some disease?

Æge. Of no distemper, of no blast he dy'd;
 But fell like autumn-fruit that mellow'd long:
 Ev'n wonder'd at, because he dropp'd no sooner.
 Fate seem'd to wind him up for fourscore years;
 Yet freshly ran he on ten winters more;
 Till, like a clock worn out with eating time,
 The wheels of weary life at last stood still.

‘ *OEdip.* Oh, let me press thee in my youthful arms,
 And smother my old age in thy embrâces.
 ‘ Yes, Thebans, yes, Jocasta, yes, Adraustus,

‘ Old Polybus, the king, my father’s dead.
 ‘ Fires shall be kindled in the midst of Thebes ;
 ‘ I’ th’ midst of tumult, wars, and pestilence,
 ‘ I will rejoice for Polybus’s death.
 ‘ Know, be it known to the limits of the world ;
 ‘ Yet farther, let it pass yon dazzling roof,
 ‘ The mansion of the gods, and strike them deaf
 ‘ With everlasting peals of thund’ring joy.

‘ *Tir.* Fate ! Nature ! Fortune ! what is all this world ?’

OEdip. Now, dotard ; now, thou blind old wizard prophet,

Where are your boding ghosts, your altars now ;
 Your birds of knowledge, that in dusky air,
 Chatter futurity ? and where are now
 Your oracles, that call’d me parricide ?
 Is he not dead ? deep laid in his monument ?
 And was not I in Thebes when Fate attack’d him ?
 Avaunt, begone, you visors of the gods !
 Were I as other sons, now I should weep ;
 But, as I am, I’ve reason to rejoice ;
 And will, though his cold shade should rise and blast me,
 Oh, for this death, let waters break their bounds,
 Rocks, valleys, hills, with splitting Io’s ring :
 Io, Jocasta, Io Pæan sing.

Tir. Who would not now conclude a happy end !
 But all Fate’s turns are swift and unexpected.

Æge. Your royal mother, Merope, as if
 She had no soul since you forsook the land,
 Waves all the neighb’ring princes that adore her.

OEdip. Waves all the princes ! Poor heart ! for what ?
 Oh, speak.

Æge. She, tho’ in full-blown flow’r of glorious beauty,
 Grows cold, ev’n in the summer of her age ;
 And, for your sake, has sworn to die unmarry’d.

OEdip. How ! for my sake, die, and not marry ! Oh,
 My fit returns.

Æge. This diamond, with a thousand kisses bless’d,
 With thousand sighs and wishes for your safety,
 She charg’d me give you, with the general homage
 Of our Corinthian lords.

OEdip. There’s magic in it, take it from my sight ;
 There’s not a beam it darts, but carries hell,
 Hot flashing lust, and necromantic incest :

Take it from these sick eyes, Oh, hide it from me.
 No, my Jocasta, though Thebes cast me out,
 While Merope's alive, I'll ne'er return !
 Oh, rather let me walk round the wide world
 A beggar, than accept a diadem
 On such abhor'd conditions.

Joc. You make, my Lord, your own unhappiness,
 By these extravagant and needless fears.

OEdip. Needless ! Oh, all you gods ! By Heav'n I'd
 Embrue my hands up to my very shoulders [rather
 In the dear entrails of the best of fathers,
 Than offer at the execrable act
 Of damn'd incest : therefore no more of her.

Æge. And why, Oh, sacred Sir, if subjects may
 Presume to look into their monarch's breast,
 Why should the chaste and spotless Merope
 Infuse such thoughts as I must blush to name ?

OEdip. Because the god of Delphos did forewarn me,
 With thundering oracles.

Æge. May I entreat to know them ?

OEdip. Yes, my *Ægeon* ; but the sad remembrance
 Quite blasts my soul : see then the swelling priest !
 Methinks I have his image now in view :
 He mounts the *Tripos* in a minute's space,
 His clouded head knocks at the temple-roof,
 While from his mouth
 These dismal words are heard :
 " Fly, wretch, whom Fate has doom'd thy father's blood
 to spill,

And with prepost'rous births thy mother's womb to fill."

Æge. Is this the cause
 Why you refuse the diadem of Corinth ?

OEdip. The cause ? Why, is it not a monstrous one ?

Æge. Great Sir, you may return : and tho' you should
 Enjoy the queen (which all the gods forbid)
 The act would prove no incest.

OEdip. How, *Ægeon* ?
 Though I enjoy'd my mother, not incestuous !
 Thou rav'st, and so do I ; and these all catch
 My madness ; look, they're dead with deep distraction.
 Not incest ! What, not incest with my mother ?

Æge. My Lord, queen Merope is not your mother.

OEdip.

OEdip. Ha ! did I hear thee right ? Not Merope
My mother !

Æge. Nor was Polybus your father.

OEdip. Then all my days and nights must now be spent
In curious search to find out those dark parents
Who gave me to the world ; speak then, *Ægeon*,
By all the gods celestial and infernal,
By all the ties of nature, blood, and friendship,
Conceal not from this rack'd despairing king
A point or smallest grain of what thou know'st :
Speak then, Oh, answer to my doubts directly.
If royal Polybus was not my father,
Why was I call'd his son ?

Æge. He, from my arms,
Receiv'd you as the fairest gift of nature.
Not but you were adorn'd with all the riches
That empire could bestow in costly mantles
Upon its infant heir.

OEdip. But was I made the heir of Corinth's crown,
Because *Ægeon*'s hands presented me ?

Æge. By my advice,
Being past all hope of children,
He took, embrac'd, and own'd you for his son.

OEdip. Perhaps I then am yours ; instruct me, Sir :
If it be so, I'll kneel and weep before you,
With all th' obedience of a penitent child,
Imploring pardon.
Kill me, if you please,
I will not writhe my body at the wound :
But sink upon your feet with a last sigh,
And ask forgiveness with my dying hands.

Æge. Oh, rise, and call not to this aged cheek
The little blood which should keep warm my heart ;
You are not, mine, nor ought I to be blest
With such a god-like offspring, Sir, I found you
Upon the mount Cithæron.

OEdip. Oh, speak, go on, the air grows sensible
Of the great things you utter, and is calm :
The hurry'd orbs, with storms so rack'd of late,
Seem to stand still, as if that Jove were talking.
Cithæron ! Speak, the valley of Cithæron !

Æge. Oft-times before I thither did resort,

Charm'd

Charm'd with the conversation of a man
 Who led a rural life, and had command
 O'er all the shepherds, who about those vales
 Tended their numerous flocks : in this man's arms
 I saw you smiling at a fatal dagger,
 Whose point he often offer'd at your throat ;
 But then you smil'd, and then he drew it back,
 Then lifted it again, you smil'd again ;
 'Till he at last in fury threw it from him,
 And cry'd aloud, The gods forbid thy death.
 Then I rush'd in, and after some discourse,
 To me he did bequeath your innocent life ;
 And I, the welcome care to Polybus.

OEdip. To whom belongs the master of the shepherds ?

Æge. His name I knew not, or I have forgot :
 That he was of the family of Laius,
 I well remember.

OEdip. And is your friend alive ? for if he be,
 I'll buy his presence, though it cost my crown.

Æge. Your menial attendants best can tell
 Whether he lives, or not ; and who has now
 His place.

Joc. Winds, bear me to some barren island,
 Where print of human feet was never seen,
 O'er-grown with weeds of such a monstrous height,
 Their baleful tops are wash'd with bellying clouds ;
 Beneath whose venomous shade I may have vent
 For horrors that would blast the barbarous world.

OEdip. If there be any here that knows the person
 Whom he describ'd, I charge him on his life
 To speak ; concealment shall be sudden death :
 But he who brings him forth, shall have reward
 Beyond ambition's lust.

Tir. His name is Phorbas ;
 Jocasta knows him well ; but if I may
 Advise, rest where you are, and seek no farther.

OEdip. Then all goes well, since Phorbas is secur'd
 By my Jocasta. Haste, and bring him forth :
 My love, my queen, give orders. Ha ! what mean
 These tears, and groans, and strugglings ? Speak, my fair,
 Why are thy troubles ?

Joc. Yours ; and yours are mine :

Let me conjure you take the prophet's counsel,
And let this Phorbas go.

OEdip. Not for the world.

By all the gods, I'll know my birth, though death
Attends the search: I have already past
The middle of the stream; and to return
Seems greater labour, than to venture o'er.
Therefore produce him.

Joc. Once more, by the gods,
I beg, my OEdipus, my lord, my life,
My love, my all, my only utmost hope,
I beg you, banish Phorbas: Oh, the gods,
I kneel, that you may grant this first request.
Deny me all things else; but for my sake,
And as you prize your own eternal quiet,
Never let Phorbas come into your presence.

OEdip. You must be rais'd, and Phorbas shall appear,
Though his dread eyes were basilisks. Guards, haste,
Search the queen's lodgings: find, and force him hither.

[*Exeunt Guards.*]

Joc. Oh, OEdipus, yet send,
And stop their entrance, ere it be too late:
Unless you wish to see Jocasta rent
With furies, slain out-right with mere distraction,
Keep from your eyes and mine the dreadful Phorbas.
Forbear this search, I'll think you more than mortal
Will you yet hear me?

OEdip. Tempests will be heard,
And waves will dash, though rocks their basis keep. —
But see, they enter. If thou truly lov'st me,
Either forbear this subject, or retire.

Enter Hæmon, Guards, with Phorbas.

Joc. Prepare then, wretched prince, prepare to hear
A story, that shall turn thee into stone.
Could there be hewn a monstrous gap in nature,
A flaw made through the center, by some god,
Through which the groans of ghosts may strike thy ears,
They will not wound thee as this story will.
Hark, hark! a hollow voice calls out aloud,
Jocasta! Yes, I'll to the royal bed,
Where first the mysteries of our loves were acted,
And double-dye it with imperial crimson;

Tear off this curling hair,
 Be gorg'd with fire, stab every vital part,
 And when at last I'm slain, to crown the horror,
 My poor tormented ghost shall cleave the ground,
 To try if hell can yet more deeply wound. *[Exit.]*

OEdip. She's gone; and as she went, methought her
 Grew larger, while a thousand frantic spirits *[eyes]*
 Seething, like rising bubbles, on the brim,
 Peep'd from the watery brink, and glow'd upon me.
 I'll seek no more; but hush my genius up
 That throws me on my fate. — Impossible!
 Oh, wretched man, whose too too busy thoughts
 Ride swifter than the galloping heav'ns round,
 With an eternal hurry of the foul;
 Nay, there's a time when ev'n the rolling year
 Seems to stand still, dead calms are in the ocean,
 When not a breath disturbs the drowsy waves:
 But man, the very monster of the world,
 Is ne'er at rest, the soul for ever wakes.
 Come then, since Destiny thus drives us on,
 Let's know the bottom. *Hæmon*, you I sent:
 Where is that *Phorbas*?

Hæm. Here, my royal Lord.

OEdip. Speak first, *Ægeon*, say, is this the man?

Æge. My Lord, it is: though time has plough'd that
 With many furrows since I saw it first; *[face]*
 Yet I'm too well acquainted with the ground, quite to

OEdip. Peace! stand back a while. *[forget it.]*
 Come hither, friend; I hear thy name is *Phorbas*.
 Why dost thou turn thy face? I charge thee answer
 To what I shall enquire: wert thou not once
 The servant to king *Laius* here in Thebes?

Phor. I was, great Sir, his true and faithful servant,
 Born and bred up in court, no foreign slave.

OEdip. What office hadst thou? What was thy em-
 ployment?

Phor. He made me lord of all his rural pleasures;
 For much he lov'd them: oft I entertain'd
 With sporting swains, o'er whom I had command.

OEdip. Where was thy residence? To what part o' th'
 Didst thou most frequently resort? *[country]*

Phor. To mount *Cithæron*, and the pleasant vallies
 Which all about lie shadowing its large feet.

OEdip.

OEdip. Come forth, Ægeon. Ha! why start'st thou,
Phorbas?

Forward, I say, and face to face confront him;
Look wistly on him, through him, if thou canst,
And tell me on thy life, say, dost thou know him?
Didst thou e'er see him? e'er converse with him
Near mount Cithæron?

Phor. Who, my Lord, this man?

OEdip. This man, this old, this venerable man:
Speak, didst thou ever meet him there?

Phor. Where, sacred Sir?

OEdip. Near mount Cithæron; answer to the purpose,
'Tis a king speaks; and royal minutes are
Of much more worth than thousand vulgar years:
Didst thou e'er see this man near mount Cithæron?

Phor. Most sure, my Lord, I have seen lines like those
His visage bears; but know not where nor when.

Æge. Is't possible you should forget your ancient friend?
There are perhaps

Particulars, which may excite your dead remembrance.
Have you forgot I took an infant from you,
Doom'd to be murder'd in that gloomy vale?
The swadling-bands were purple, wrought with gold.
Have you forgot too how you wept, and begg'd
That I should breed him up, and ask no more?

Phor. What e'er I begg'd, thou, like a dotard, speak'st
More than is requisite. And what of this?
Why is it mention'd now? And why, Oh, why
Dost thou betray the secrets of thy friend?

Æge. Be not too rash. That infant grew at last
A king; and here the happy monarch stands.

Phor. Ha! whither would'st thou? Oh, what hast thou
utter'd!

For what thou hast said, death strike thee dumb for ever!

OEdip. Forbear to curse the innocent; and be
Accurst thyself, thou shifting traitor, villain,
Damn'd hypocrite, equivocating slave.

Phor. Oh, heav'ns! wherein, my Lord, have I offended?

OEdip. Why speak you not according to my charge?
Bring forth the rack: since mildness cannot win you,
Torments shall force.

Phor. Hold, hold, Oh, dreadful Sir;
You will not rack an innocent old man.

OEdip. Speak then.

Phor. Alas, what would you have me say ?

OEdip. Did this old man take from your arms an infant ?

Phor. He did : and, Oh, I wish to all the gods, Phorbas had perish'd in that very moment.

OEdip. Moment ! Thou shalt be hours, days, years, a Here, bind his hands ; he dallies with my fury : [dying.] But I shall find a way —

Phor. My Lord, I said I gave the infant to him.

OEdip. Was he thy own, or given thee by another ?

Phor. He was not mine ; but given me by another.

OEdip. Whence ? and from whom ? What city ? Of what house ?

Phor. Oh, royal Sir, I bow me to the ground, Would I could sink beneath it : by the gods, I do conjure you to enquire no more.

OEdip. Furies and hell ! Hæmon, bring forth the rack, Fetch hither cords, and knives, and sulphurous flames : He shall be bound, and gash'd, his skin flead off, And burnt alive.

Phor. Oh, spare my age.

OEdip. Rise then, and speak.

Phor. Dread Sir, I will.

OEdip. Who gave that infant to thee ?

Phor. One of king Laius' family.

OEdip. Oh, you immortal gods ! But say, who was't ? Which of the family of Laius gave it ? A servant, or one of the royal-blood ?

Phor. Oh, wretch'd state ! I die, unless I speak ; And, if I speak, most certain death attends me !

OEdip. Thou shalt not die. Speak then, who was it ? While I have sense to understand the horror ; [Speak, For I grow cold.]

Phor. The queen Jocasta told me It was her son by Laius.

OEdip. Oh, you gods ! — But did she give it thee ?

Phor. My Lord, she did.

OEdip. Wherfore ? For what ? — Oh, break not yet my heart ;

Though my eyes burst, no matter. Wilt thou tell me, Or, must I ask for ever ; for what end, Why gave she thee her child ?

Phor. To murder it.

OEdip.

OEdip. Oh, more than savage ! murder her own boy
Without a cause !

[wels !

Phor. There was a dreadful one,
Which had foretold, that most unhappy son
Should kill his father, and enjoy his mother.

OEdip. But one thing more.

Jocasta told me thou wert by the chariot
When the old king was slain. Speak, I conjure thee,
For I shall never ask thee ought again,
What was the number of th' assassines ?

Phor. The dreadful deed was acted but by one ;
And sure that one had much of your resemblance.

OEdip. 'Tis well ! I thank you, gods ! 'tis wond'rous
Daggers, and poisons ! Oh, there is no need [well !
For my dispatch : and you, you merciless pow'rs,
Hoard up your thunder-stones ; keep, keep your bolts
For crimes of little note.

Adr. Help, Hæmon, help, and bow him gently forward ;
• Chafe, chafe his temples : how the mighty spirits,
• Half-strangled with the damp his sorrows rais'd,
• Struggle for vent ! But see, he breathes again,
• And vigorous nature breaks through opposition.
How fares my royal friend ?

OEdip. The worse for you.
Oh, barbarous men, and, Oh, the hated light,
Why did you force me back to curse the day ;
To curse my friends ; to blast with this dark breath
The yet untainted earth and circling air ?
To raise new plagues, and call new vengeance down,
Why did you tempt the gods, and dare to touch me ?
• Methinks there's not a hand that grasps this hell,
• But should run up like flax all blazing fire.
Stand from this spot, I wish you as my friends,
And come not near me, lest the gaping earth
Swallow you too — Lo, I am gone already.

[Draws, and claps his sword to his breast, which
Adrastus strikes away with his foot.

Adr. You shall no more be trusted with your life :
Creon, Alcandér, Hæmon, help to hold him.

OEdip. Cruel Adrastus ! Wilt thou, Hæmon, too ?
Are these the obligations of my friends ?
Oh, worse than worst of my most barbarous foes !

Dear, dear Adraustus, look with half an eye,
 On my unheard of woes, and judge thyself,
 If it be fit that such a wretch should live !
 Oh, by these melting eyes, unus'd to weep,
 With all the low submissions of a slave,
 I do conjure thee give my horrors way ;
 'Talk not of life, for that will make me rave :
 As well thou may'st advise a tortur'd wretch,
 All mangled o'er from head to foot with wounds,
 And his bones broke, to wait a better day.

Adr. My Lord, you ask-me things impossible ;
 And I with justice should be thought your foe,
 To leave you in this tempest of your foul.

Tir. Tho' banish'd Thebes, in Corinth you may reign ;
 Th' infernal pow'rs themselves exact no more :
 Calm then your rage, and once more seek the gods.

OEdip. I'll have no more to do with gods, nor men !
 • Hence, from my arms, avaunt. Enjoy thy mother !
 • What, violate, with bestial appetite,
 • The sacred veils that wrapt thee yet unborn !
 • This is not to be borne ! Hence : off, I say ;
 • For they who let my vengeance, make themselves
 • Accomplices in my most horrid guilt.

• *Adr.* Let it be so : we'll fence Heav'n's fury from
 • And suffer all together : this, perhaps, [you,
 • When ruin comes, may help to break your fall.

OEdip. Oh, that, as oft I have at Athens seen
 The stage arise, and the big clouds descend ;
 So now in very deed I might behold
 The pond'rous earth, and all yon' marble roof
 Meet, like the hand of Jove, and crush mankind.
 For all the elements, and all the pow'rs
 Celestial, nay, terrestrial, and infernal,
 Conspire the rack of out-cast OEdipus.
 Fall darkness then, and everlasting night.
 Shadow the globe ; may the sun never dawn,
 The silver moon be blotted from her orb ;
 And for an universal rout of Nature
 Through all the inmost chambers of the sky,
 May there not be a glimpse, one starry spark,
 But gods meet gods, and justice in the dark ;

That

That jars may rise, and wrath divine be hurl'd,
Which may to atoms shake the solid world.

[Exeunt]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Creon, Alcander and Pyracmon.

CREON.

THEBES is at length my own ; and all my wishes,
Which sure were great as royalty e'er form'd,
Fortune and my auspicious stars have crown'd.
O diadem, thou center of ambition,
Wherè all its different lines are reconcil'd,
As if thou wert the burning-glass of glory !

Pyr. Might I be counsellor, I would intreat you
To cool a little, Sir ;
Find out Eurydice ;
And with the resolution of a man
Mark'd out for greatness, give the fatal choice
Of death or marriage.

Alc. Survey curs'd OEdipus,
As one who tho' unfortunate, belov'd,
Thought innocent, and therefore much lamented
By all the Thebans : you must mark him dead :
Since nothing but his death, not banishment,
Can give assurance to your doubtful reign.

Cre. Well have you done, to snatch me from the storm
Of racking transport, where the little streams
Of love, revenge, and all the under passions,
As waters are by sucking whirlpools drawn,
Were quite devour'd in the vast gulph of empire ;
Therefore, Pyracmon, as you boldly urg'd,
Eurydice shall die, or be my bride.
Alcander, summon to their master's aid
My menial servants, and all those whom change
Of state and hope of the new monarch's favour,
Can wish to take our part. Away ! What now ?

[Exit Alcander.]

Enter

Enter Hæmon.

When Hæmon weeps, ' without the help of ghosts,'
I may foretel there is a fatal cause.

Hæm. Is't possible you should be ignorant
Of what has happen'd to the desperate king?

Cre. I know no more but that he was conducted
Into his closet, where I saw him fling
His trembling body on the royal bed.
All left him there, at his desire, alone :
But sure no ill, unless he dy'd with grief,
Could happen, for you bore his sword away.

Hæm. I did ; and having lock'd the door, I stood ;
And through a chink I found, not only heard,
But saw him, when he thought no eye beheld him :
At first deep sighs heav'd from his woeful heart
Murmurs, and groans that shook the outward rooms.
And art thou still alive, O wretch ! he cry'd :
Then groan'd again, as if his sorrowful soul
Had crack'd the strings of life, and burst away.

Cre. I weep to hear ; how then should I have griev'd,
Had I beheld this wond'rous heap of sorrow !
But to the fatal period.

Hæm. Thrice he struck,
With all his force, his hollow groaning breast,
And thus, with out-cries, to himself complain'd.
But thou canst weep then, and thou think'st 'tis well.
These bubbles of the shallowest, emptiest sorrow,
Which children vent for toys, and women rain
For any trifle their fond hearts are set on ;
Yet these thou think'st are ample satisfaction
For bloodiest murder, and for burning lust :
No, Parricide ; if thou must weep, weep blood ;
Weep eyes instead of tears : O, by the gods,
'Tis greatly thought, he cry'd, and fits my woes.
Which said, he smil'd revengefully, and leapt
Upon the floor ; thence gazing at the skies,
• His eye-balls fiery red, and glowing vengeance ;
• Gods, I accuse you not, tho' I no more
• Will view your heav'n, till with more durable glasses,
• The mighty soul's immortal perspectives,
• I find your dazzling beings : ' take, he cry'd,
Take, eyes, your last, your fatal farewell-view ;

Then

Then with a groan, that seem'd the call of death,
With horrid force lifting his impious hands,
He snatch'd, he tore, from forth their bloody orbs,
The balls of sight, and dash'd them on the ground.

Cre. A master-piece of horror; new and dreadful!

Hæm. I ran to succour him; but, oh! too late;
For he had pluck'd the remnant strings away.
What then remains, but that I find Tiresias,
Who, with his wisdom, may allay those furies
That haunt his gloomy soul?

[Exit.]

Cre. Heav'n will reward
Thy care, most honest, faithful, foolish Hæmon!
But see, Alcander enters, well attended.

Enter Alcander, attended.

I see thou hast been diligent.

Alc. Nothing these,
For number, to the crowds that soon will follow:
Be resolute,
And call your utmost fury to revenge.

Cre. Ha! thou hast given
Th' alarm to cruelty; and never may
These eyes be clos'd, till they behold Adraustus
Stretch'd at the feet of false Eurydice.
But see, they're here? retire a while, and mark.

Enter Adraustus and Eurydice attended.

Adr. Alas, Eurydice, what fond rash man,
What inconsiderate and ambitious fool,
That shall hereafter read the fate of OEdipus,
Will dare, with his frail hand, to grasp a scepter?

Eur. 'Tis true, a crown seems dreadful, and I wish
That you and I, more lowly plac'd, might pass.
Our softer hours in humble cells away:
Not but I love you to that infinite height,
I could (O wond'rous proof of fiercest love!)
Be greatly wretched in a court with you.

Adr. Take then this most lov'd innocence away:
Fly from tumultuous Thebes, from blood and murder;
Fly from the author of all villanies,
Rapes, death and treason; from that fury Creon.
Vouchsafe that I, o'er-joy'd, may bear you hence,
And at your feet present the crown of Argos.

[Creon and Attendants come up to him.]

Cre.

Cre. I have o'er-heard thy black design, Adrastus,
And therefore as a traitor to this state,
Death ought to be thy lot : let it suffice
That Thebes surveys thee as a prince ; abuse not
Her proffer'd mercy, but retire betimes,
Lest she repent, and hasten on thy doom.

Adr. Think not, most abject,
Most abhor'd of men,
Adrastus will vouchsafe to answer thee.
Thebans, to you I justify my love :
I have addrest my prayer to this fair princess ;
But, if I ever meant a violence,
Or thought to ravish, as that traitor did,
What humblest adorations could not win ;
Brand me, you gods, blot me with foul dishonour,
And let men curse me by the name of Creon !

Eur. Hear me, O Thebans, if you dread the wrath
Of her whom fate ordain'd to be your queen,
Hear me, and dare not, as you prize your lives,
To take the part of that rebellious traitor.
By the decree of royal OEdipus,
By queen Jocasta's order, by what's more,
My own dear vows of everlasting love,
I here resign to prince Adrastus' arms
All that the world can make me mistress of.

Cre. O, perjur'd woman !
Draw all ! and when I give the word fall on.
Traitor, resign the princess, or this moment
Expect, with all those most unfortunate wretches,
Upon this spot straight to be hewn in pieces.

Adr. No, villain, no ;
With twice those odds of men,
I doubt not in this cause to vanquish thee.
Captain, remember to your care I give
My love ; ten thousand thousand times more dear
Than life or liberty.

Cre. Fall on, Alcander.
Pyramon, you and I must wheel about
For nobler game, the princess.

Adr. Ah, traitor, dost thou shun me ?
Follow, follow,
My brave companions, see the cowards fly.

[*Exeunt fighting : Creon's party beaten off by Adrastus.*

Enter

Enter OEdipus.

OEdip. O, 'tis too little this, thy loss of sight,
 What has it done? I shall be gaz'd at now
 The more; be pointed at, There goes the monster!
 Not have I hid my horrors from myself;
 For tho' corporeal light be lost for ever,
 The bright reflecting soul, through glaring opticks,
 Presents in larger size her black ideas,
 Doubling the bloody prospects of my crimes:
 Holds Fancy down, and makes her act again,
 With wife and mother. ' Tortures, hell and furies!
 ' Ha! now the baleful offspring's brought to light!
 ' In horrid form they rank themselves before me;
 ' What shall I call this medley of creation?
 ' Here's one, with all th' obedience of a son,
 ' Borrowing Jocasta's look, kneels at my feet,
 ' And calls me father; there a sturdy boy,
 ' Resembling Laius just as when I kill'd him,
 ' Bears up, and with his cold hand grasping mine,
 ' Cries out, how fares my brother OEdipus?
 ' What, sons and brothers! Sisters and daughters too!
 ' Fly all, begone, fly from my whirling brain;
 Hence, incest, murder; hence, you ghastly figures!
 O gods! gods, answer; is there any means?
 Let me go mad, or die.

Enter Jocasta.

Joc. Where, where is this most wretched of mankind,
 This stately image of imperial sorrow,
 Whose story told, whose very name but mention'd,
 Would cool the rage of fevers, and unlock
 The hand of lust from the pale virgin's hair.
 And throw the ravisher before her feet?

OEdip. By all my fears, I think Jocasta's voice!
 Hence; fly; begone. ' O thou far worse than worst
 Of damning charmers! O abhor'd, loath'd creature!
 Fly, by the gods, or by the fiends, I charge thee,
 Far as the east, west, north, or south of Heav'n;
 But think not thou shalt ever enter there:
 ' I he golden gates are barr'd with adamant,
 ' Gainst thee, and me; and the celestial guards,
 Still as we rise, will dash our spirits down.

Joc.

‘ *Joc.* O wretched pair ! O greatly wretched we !

‘ Two worlds of woe !

‘ *OEdip.* Art thou not gone then ? ha !

‘ How dar’st thou stand the fury of the gods ?

‘ Or com’st thou in the grave to reap new pleasures ?

‘ *Joc.* Talk on ; till thou mak’st mad my rolling brain ;

‘ Groan still more death ; and may those dismal sources

‘ Still bubble on, and pour forth blood and tears.

‘ Methinks, at such a meeting, Heav’n stands still ;

‘ The sea nor ebbs nor flows : this mole-hill earth

‘ Is heav’d no more : the busy eminets cease :

‘ Yet hear me on —

‘ *OEdip.* Speak then, and blast my soul.

‘ *Joc.* O, my lov’d Lord, tho I resolve a ruin

‘ To match my crimes ; by all my miseries,

‘ ’Tis horror, worse than thousand thousand deaths,

‘ To send me hence without a kind farewell. [casta.]

‘ *OEdip.* Gods, how she shakes me ! Stay thee, O Jo-

‘ Speak something ere thou goest for ever from me.

‘ *Joc.* ’Tis woman’s weakness, that I should be pity’d ;

‘ Pardon me then, O greatest, tho’ most wretched

‘ Of all thy kind : my soul is on the brink,

‘ And sees the boiling furnace just beneath :

‘ Do not thou push me off, and I will go,

‘ With such a willingness, as if that Heav’n

‘ With all its glory glow’d for my reception.

‘ *OEdip.* O, in my heart, I feel the pangs of nature ;

‘ It works with kindness o’er : give, give me way ;

‘ I feel a melting here, a tenderness,

‘ Too mighty for the anger of the gods !

‘ Direct me to thy knees : yet Oh forbear,

‘ Lest the dead embers should revive.

‘ Stand off — and at just distance

‘ Let me groan my horrors — here

‘ On the earth, here blow my utmost gale ;

‘ Here sob my sorrows, till I burst with sighing ;

‘ Here gasp and languish out my wounded soul ’

Joc. In spite of all those crimes the cruel gods
Can charge me with, I know my innocence ;
Know yours : — tis fate alone that makes us wretched,
For you are still my husband.

OEdip. Swear I am,

OE D I P U S.

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And I'll believe thee ; steal into thy arms,
Renew endearments, think them no pollutions,
But chaste as spirits' joys : gently I'll come,
Thus weeping blind, like dewy night, upon thee,
And fold thee softly in my arms to slumber.

[*The ghost of Laius ascends by degrees, pointing at Jocasta.*

Joc. Begone, my Lord ! Alas, what are we doing ?
Fly from my arms ! Whirlwinds, seas, continents,
And worlds, divide us ! Oh, thrice happy thou,
Who hast no use of eyes ; for here's a sight
Would turn the melting face of Mercy's self
To a wild fury.

OEdip. Ha ! what seest thou there ?

Joc. The spirit of my husband ! Oh, the gods !
How wan he looks !

OEdip. Thou rav'st ; thy husband's here.

Joc. There, there he mounts

In circling fire among the blushing clouds !
And see, he waves Jocasta from the world !

Ghost. Jocasta, OEdipus. [Vanish with thunder.]

OEdip. What would'st thou have ?

Thou know'st I cannot come to thee, detain'd
In darkness here, and kept from means of death.
I've heard a spirit's force is wonderful ;
At whose approach, when starting from his dungeon,
The earth does shake, and the old ocean groans,
Rocks are remov'd, and tow'rs are thunder'd down :
And walls of brafs, and gates of adamant
Are passable as air, and fleet like winds.

Joc. Was that a raven's croak, or my son's voice ?
No matter which ; I'll to the grave and hide me :
Earth, open, or I'll tear thy bowels up.
Hark ! he goes on, and blabs the deed of incest.

OEdip. Strike then, imperial ghost ; dash all at once
This house of clay into a thousand pieces ;
That my poor ling'ring soul may take her flight
To your immortal dwellings.

Joc. Haste thee then,
Or I shall be before thee : see ; thou canst not see ;
Then I will tell thee that my wings are on :
I'll mount, I'll fly, and with a port divine
Glide all along the gaudy milky soil,

To find my Laius out : ask every god
In his bright palace, if he knows my Laius,
My murder'd Laius !

OEdip. Ha ! how's this, Jocasta ?
Nay, if thy brain be sick, then thou art happy.
Joc. Ha ! will you not ? Shall I not find him out ?
Will you not shew him ? Are my tears despis'd ?
Why, then I'll thunder ; yes, I will be mad,
And fright you with my cries : yes, cruel gods,
Though vultures, eagles, dragons tear my heart,
I'll snatch celestial flames, fire all your dwellings,
Melt down your golden roofs, and make your doors
Of crystal fly from off their diamond hinges ;
Drive you all out from your ambrosial hives,
To swarm like bees about the field of heav'n :
This will I do, unless you shew me Laius,
My dear, my murder'd Lord. Oh, Laius ! Laius ! Laius !

[Exit.]

OEdip. Excellent grief ! why, this is as it should be !
No mourning can be suitable to crimes
Like ours, but what death makes, or madness forms.
I could have wish'd, methought, for fight again,
To mark the gallantry of her distraction :
Her blazing eyes darting the wand'ring stars,
T'have seen her mouth the heav'ns, and mate the gods.
While with her thund'ring voice she menac'd high,
And every accent twaing'd with smarting sorrow ;
But what's all this to thee ? Thou, coward, yet
Art living, canst not, wilt not find the road
To the great palace of magnificent death ;
Though thousand ways lead to his thousand doors,
Which day and night are still unbarr'd for all.

[*Clashing of swords : drums and trumpets without.*
Hark ! 'tis the noise of clashing swords ! the sound
Comes near : Oh, that a battle would come o'er me !
If I but grasp a swoid, or wrest a dagger,
I'll make a ruin with the first that falls.

Enter Hæmon, with Guards.

Hæm. Seize him, and bear him to the western tow'r.
Pardon me, sacred Sir ; I am inform'd
That Creon has designs upon your life :
Forgive me then, if, to preserve you from him,
I order your confinement.

OEdip.

OEdip. Slaves unhand me:
 I think thou hast a sword : 'twas the wrong side.
 Yet, cruel Hæmon, think not I will live ;
 He that could tear his eyes out, sure can find
 Some desperate way to stifle this curs'd breath.
 ' Or if I starve ! but that's a ling'ring fate ;
 ' Or if I leave my brains upon the wall !
 ' The airy soul can easily o'er-shoot
 ' Those bounds with which thou striv'st to pale her in :
 ' Yes, I will perish in despight of thee ;
 ' And, by the rage that stirs me, if I meet thee
 ' In th' other world I'll curse thee for this usage.' [Ex,

Hæm. Tirefias, after him ; and with your counsel
 Advise him humbly ; charm, if possible,
 These feuds within : while I without extinguish,
 Or perish in th' attempt, the furious Creon ;
 That brand which sets our city in a flame.

Tir. Heav'n prosper your intent, and give a period
 To all our plagues : what old Tirefias can,
 Shall straight be done. Lead, Mantoe to the tow'r.

[*Exeunt Tir. & Man.*

Hæm. Follow me all, and help to part this fray,

[*Trumpets again.*

Or fall together in the bloody broil. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Creon with Eurydice, Pyracmon, and his party,
giving ground to Adrastus.

Cre. Hold, hold your arms, Adrastus, prince of Argos,
 Hear, and behold ; Eurydice is my prisoner.

Adr. What wouldst thou, hell-hound ?

Cre. See this brandish'd dagger :
 Forego th' advantage which thy arms have won,
 Or, by the blood which trembles through the heart
 Of her whom more than life I know thou lov'st,
 I'll bury to the haft, in her fair breast,
 This instrument of my revenge. [*hand.*

Adr. Stay thee, damn'd wretch : hold, stop thy bloody

Cre. Give order then, that on this instant, now,
 This moment, all thy soldiers straight disband.

Adr. Away, my friends, since fate has so allotted ;
 Begone, and leave me to the villain's mercy.

Eur. Ah, my Adrastus ! call 'em, call 'em back !
 Stand there ; come back, O, cruel, barbarous men !

Could you then leave your lord, your prince your king,
After so bravely having fought his cause,
To perish by the hand of this base villain ?
Why rather rush you not at once together
All to his ruin ? drag him through the streets,
Hang his contagious quarters on the gates ;
Nor let my death affright you.

Cre. Die first thyself then.

Adr. O, I charge thee hold.

Hence from my presence all : he's not my friend,
That disobeys : see, art thou now appeas'd ?

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

Or is there ought else yet remains to do,
That can atone thee ? slack thy thirst of blood
With mine : but save, O save that innocent wretch.

Cre. Forego thy sword, and yield thyself my prisoner.

Eur. Yet while there's any dawn of hope to save
Thy precious life, my dear Adrastus,
Whate'er thou dost, deliver not thy sword ;
With that thou mayst get off, tho' odds oppose thee :
For me, O fear not ; no, he dare not touch me ;
His horrid love will spare me. Keep thy sword ;
Lest I be ravish'd after thou art slain.

Adr. Instruct me, gods, what shall Adrastus do ?

Cre. Do what thou wilt, when she is dead : my soldier
With numbers will o'er-pow'r thee. Is't thy wish
Eurydice should fall before thee ?

Adr. Traitor, no :
Better that thou, and I, and all mankind,
Should be no more.

Cre. Then cast thy sword away,
And yield thee to my mercy, or I strike.

Adr. Hold thy rais'd arm ; give me a moment's pause.
My father, when he blest me, gave me this ;
My son, said he, let this be thy last refuge ;
If thou forego'st it, misery attends thee :
Yet love now charms it from me ; which in all
The hazards of my life I never lost.
'Tis thine, my faithful sword ; my only trust ;
Though my heart tells me, that the gift is fatal.

Cre. Fatal ! yes, foolish, love-sick prince, it shall :
Thy arrogance, thy scorn,
My wound's remembrance,

Turn, all at once, the fatal point upon thee.

Pyracmon, to the palace ; dispatch

The king : hang Hæmon up ; for he is loyal,

And will oppose me. Come, Sir, are you ready ?

Adr. Yes, villain, for whatever thou canst dare.

Eur. Hold, Creon ! or thro' me, thro' me you woun

Adr. Off, Madam, or we perish both. Behold,

I'm not unarm'd ; my poignard's in my hand :

Therefore, away —

Eur. I'll guard your life with mine.

Cre. Die both, then ; there is now no time for dallying.

[Kills Eurydice.

Eur. Ah, Prince, farewell ! farewell, my dear Adraſtus.

[Dies.

Adr. Unheard-of monster ! eldest-born of hell !

Down to thy primitive flame. [Stabs Creon.

Cre. Help, soldiers, help !

Revenge me !

Adr. More, yet more ; a thousand wounds !

I'll stab thee still, thus, to the gaping furies.

[Adraſtus falls, killed by the soldiers.

Enter Hæmon, Guards, with Alcander and Pyracmon bound ; the assassins are driven off.

Oh, Hæmon, I am slain ! nor need I name

Th' inhuman author of all villainies ;

There he lies, gasping.

Cre. If I must plunge in flames,

Burn first my arm ; base instrument, unfit

To act the dictates of my daring mind.

Burn, burn for ever, Oh, weak substitute

Of that, the god, Ambition !

[Dies.

Adr. She's gone—Oh, deadly marksman ! in the heart !

Yet in the pangs of death she grasps my hand :

Her lips, too, tremble, as if she would speak.

Her last farewell. Oh, OEdipus, thy fall

Is great ! and nobly now thou go'ſt attended.

They talk of heroes, and celestial beauties,

And wond'rous pleasures in the other world :

Let me but find her there ; I ask no more.

[Dies.

Enter a Captain to Hæmon, with Tiresias and Manto.

Cap. Oh, Sir, the queen, Jocasta, swift and wild,

As a robb'd tygress bounding o'er the woods,

Has

Has acted murders that amaze mankind.
In twisted gold I saw her daughters hang
On the bed royal, and her little sons
Stabb'd through the breasts upon the bloody pillows.

Hæm. Relentless Heav'n ! Is then the fate of Laius
Never to be aton'd. How sacred ought
Kings lives be held, when but the death of one
Demands an empire's blood for expiation !
But see, the furious, mad Jocasta's here.

SCENE draws, and discovers Jocasta held by her women,
‘ and stabbed in many places of her bosom, her hair dishe-
velled, her children slain upon the bed.’

Was ever yet a sight of so much horror
And pity brought to view !

Joc. Ah, cruel women !
Will you not let me take my last farewell
Of those dear babes ? Oh, let me run and seal
My melting soul upon their bubbling wounds !
I'll print upon their coral mouths such kisses,
As shall recall their wand'ring spirits home.
Let me go, let me go, or I will tear you piece-meal.
Help, Hæmon, help !
Help, OEdipus ! help, gods ! Jocasta dies !

Enter OEdipus above.

OEdip. I've found a window, and, I thank the gods,
'Tis quite unbar'd. Sure, by the distant noise,
The height will fit my fatal purpose well.

Joc. What, hoa, my OEdipus ! See where he stands !
His groping ghost is lodg'd upon a tow'r,
Nor can it find the road. Mount, mount, my soul !
I'll wrap thy shiv'ring spirit in lambent flames ; and so we'll
But see, we're landed on the happy coast ; [fail.
And all the golden strands are cover'd o'er
With glorious gods, that come to try our cause.
Jove, Jove, whose majesty now sinks me down,
He who himself burns in unlawful fires,
Shall judge, and shall acquit us. Oh, 'tis done !
'Tis fix'd by fate upon record divine ;
And OEdipus shall now be ever mine. [Dies.

OEdip. Speak, Hæmon, what has Fate been doing
What dreadful deed has mad Jocasta done ? [there ?

Hæm.

Hæm. The Queen herself, and all your wretched offspring,
Are by her fury slain. [spring,

OEdip. By all my woes,
She has out-done me in revenge and murder;
And I should envy her the sad applause:
But, Oh, my children! Oh, what have they done?
This was not like the mercy of the Heav'ns,
To set her madnes on such cruelty.
This stirs me more than all my sufferings,
And with my last breath I must call you tyrants.

Hæm. What mean you, Sir?

OEdip. Jocasta, lo, I come!
Oh, Laius, Labdacus, and all you spirits
Of the Cadmean race, prepare to meet me!
All weeping, rang'd along the gloomy shore,
Extend your arms t' embrace me; for I come.
May all the gods, too, from their battlements,
Behold, and wonder at a mortal's daring:
And when I knock the goal of dreadful death,
Shout, and applaud me with a clap of thunder.
Once more, thus wing'd by horrid Fate, I come
Swift as a falling meteor; lo, I fly,
And thus go downwards, to the darker sky.

[*Thunder.* He flings himself from the window. *The Thebans* gather about his body.

Hæm. Oh, prophet! OEdipus is now no more!
Oh, curs'd effect of the most deep despair!

Tir. Cease your complaints, and bear his body hence;
The dreadful sight will daunt the drooping Thebans,
Whom Heav'n decrees to raise with peace and glory.
Yet, by these terrible examples warn'd,
The sacred fury thus alarms the world.
Let none, tho' ne'er so virtuous, great, and high,
Be judg'd entirely bless'd before they die.

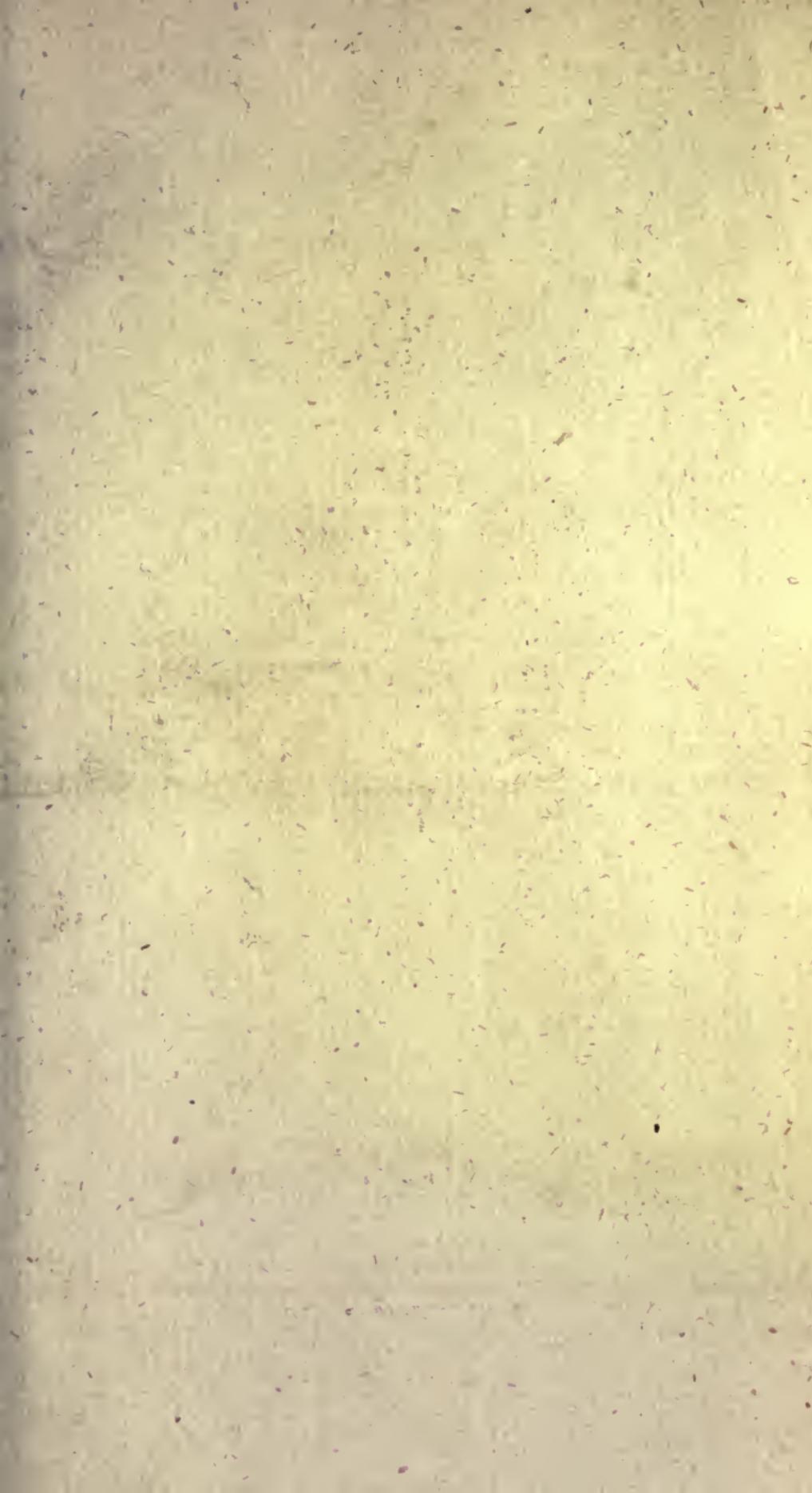
[*Exeunt;*

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

WHAT Sophocles could undertake alone,
Our poets found a work for more than one;
And therefore two lay tugging at the piece,
With all their force, to draw the pond'rous mass from Greece.
A weight that bent ev'n Seneca's strong muse,
And which Corneille's shoulders did refuse.
So hard it is th' Athenian harp to string;
So much two consuls yield to one just king.
Terror and pity this whole poem sway;
The mightiest machines that can mount a play.
How heavy will those vulgar souls be found,
Whom two such engines cannot move from ground!
When Greece and Rome have smil'd upon this birth,
You can but damn for one poor spot of earth;
And when your children find your judgment such,
They'll scorn their fires, and wish themselves born Dutch:
Each haughty poet will infer with ease,
How much his wit must underwrite to please.
As some strange churl would brandishing advance
The monumental sword that conquer'd France;
So you, by judging this, your judgment teach,
Thus far you like, that is, thus far you reach.
Since, then, the vote of full two thousand years
Has crown'd this plot, and all the dead are theirs,
Think it a debt you pay, not alms you give,
And, in your own defence, let this play live.
Think them not vain, when Sophocles is shown;
To praise his worth, they humbly doubt their own.
Yet as weak states each other's pow'r assure,
Weak poets by conjunction are secure:
Their treat is what your palates relish most.
Charm, song, a shew, a murder, and a ghost!
We know not what you can desire or hope,
To please you more, but burning of a Pope.







M^r BRERETON in the Character of DON ALONZO.
Curse on her Charms! I'll stab her thro' them all.

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
R E V E N G E.

A TRAGEDY,

As written by E. YOUNG, L. L. D.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
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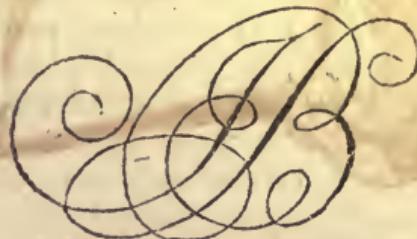
AS PERFORMED AT THE
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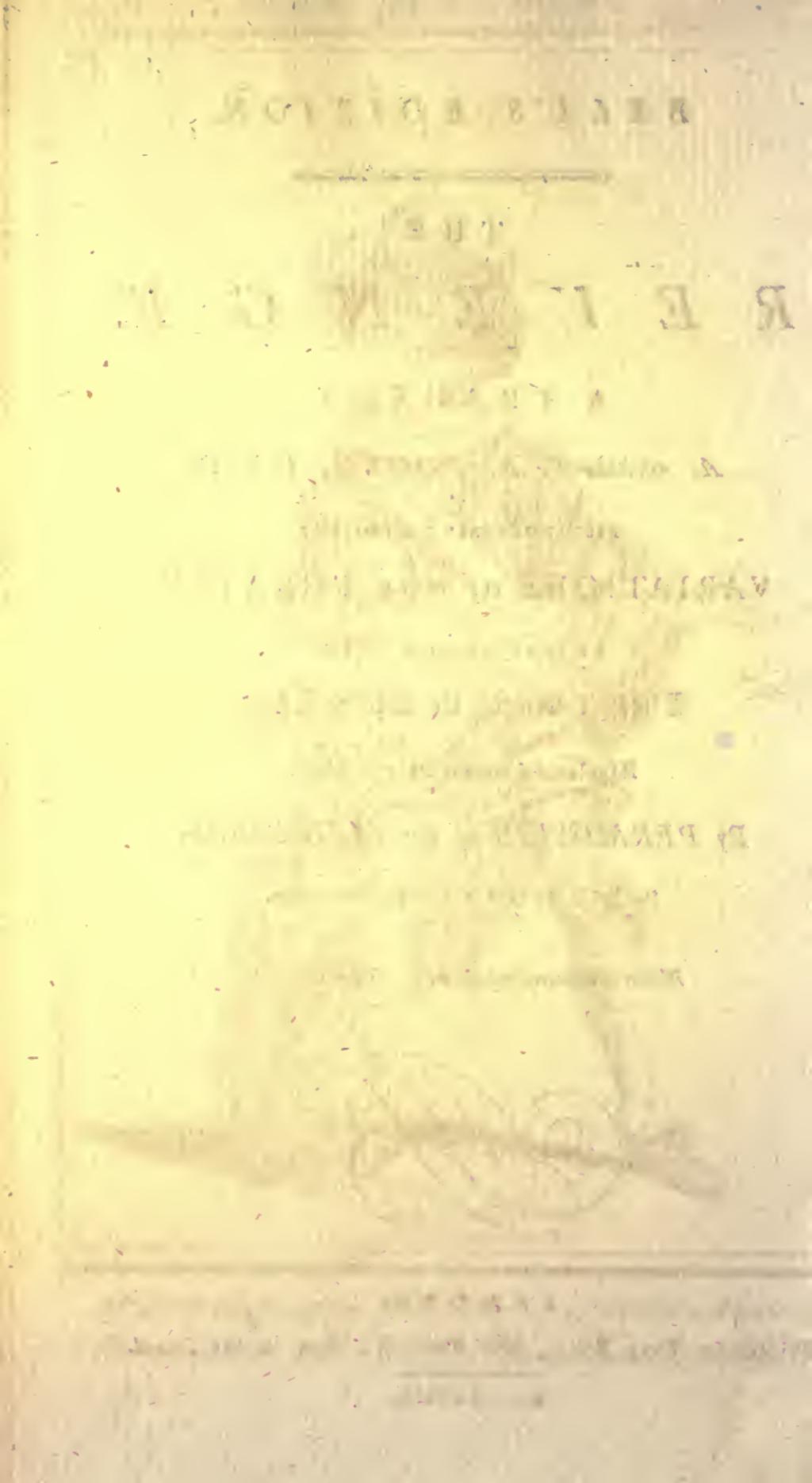
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L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

M D C C L X X V I I .



P R O L O G U E.

By a Friend.

OFT has the buskin'd muse, with action mean,
 Debas'd the glory of the tragic scene :
 While puny villains dress'd in purple pride,
 With crimes obscene the heav'n-born rage bely'd.
 To her belongs to mourn the hero's fate,
 To trace the errors of the wise and great ;
 To mark th' excess of passions too refin'd,
 And paint the tumults of a god-like mind ;
 Where mov'd with rage, exalted thoughts combine,
 And darkest deeds with beauteous colours shine.
 So lights and shades in a well-mingled draught,
 By curious touch of artful pencils wrought,
 With soft deceit amuse the doubtful eye,
 Pleas'd with the conflict of the various die.
 Thus through the following scenes with sweet surprize,
 Virtue and guilt in dread confusion rise,
 And love, and hate, at once, and grief and joy,
 Pity and rage, their mingled force employ.
 Here the soft virgin sees with secret shame
 Her charms excell'd by friendship's purer flame,
 Forc'd with reluctant virtue to approve
 The gen'rous hero who rejects her love.
 Behold him there with gloomy passions stain'd,
 A wife suspected, and an injur'd friend ;
 Yet such the toil where innocence is caught,
 That rash suspicion seems without a fault.
 We dread awhile lest beauty should succeed,
 And almost wish ev'n virtue's self may bleed.
 Mark well the black revenge, the cruel guile,
 The traitor-fiend trampling the lovely spoil
 Of beauty, truth, and innocence opprest,
 Then let the rage of furies fire your breast.
 Yet may his mighty wrongs, his just disdain,
 His bleeding country, his lov'd father slain,
 His martial pride, your admiration raise,
 And crown him with involuntary praise.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	Drury-Lane.	Covent-Garden.
Don <i>Alonzo</i> , the Spanish general,	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Wroughton.
Don <i>Carlos</i> , his friend, —	Mr. J. Aickin.	Mr. Lewis.
Don <i>Alvarez</i> , a courtier, —	Mr. Burton.	Mr. L'Estrange.
Don <i>Manuel</i> , at- tendant of Don <i>Carlos</i> , —	Mr. Robson.	Mr. Hurst.
Zanga, a captive <i>Moor</i> , —	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Jackson.

W O M E N.

Leonora, <i>Alvarez's</i> daughter, —	Mrs. Baddeley.	Mrs. Jackson.
<i>Isabella</i> , the <i>Moor's</i> mistress, —	Mrs. Reddish.	Miss Ambrose.

SCENE, SPAIN.

T H E
R E V E N G E.

* * * The lines marked with inverted commas, 'tbus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

SCENE, *Battlements, with a Sea Prospect.*

Enter Zanga.

W HETHER first nature, or long want of peace,
Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell ;
But horrors now are not displeasing to me : [Thunder.
I like this rocking of the battlements.
Rage on, ye winds, burst, clouds, and waters roar !
You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.

Enter Isabella.

Who's there ? My love !

Ifa. Why have you left my bed ?

Your absence more affrights me than the storm.

Zan. The dead alone in such a night can rest,
And I indulge my meditation here.

Woman, away. I choose to be alone.

Ifa. I know you do, and therefore will not leave you ;
Excuse me, Zanga, therefore dare not leave you.

Is this a night for walks of contemplation ?

Something unusual hangs upon your heart,

And I will know it : by our loves I will.

‘ To you I sacrific'd my virgin fame ; ’

Ask I too much to share in your distress.

Zan. In tears ? Thou fool ! then hear me, and be
In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee. [plung'd
To strike thee with astonishment at once,

I hate

I hate Alonzo. First recover that,
And then thou shalt hear farther.

Isa. Hate Alonzo!

I own, I thought Alonzo most your friend,
And that he lost the master in that name.

Zan. Hear then. 'Tis twice three years since that great
(Great let me call him, for he conquer'd me) [man
Made me the captive of his arm in fight.
He flew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I with pious rage pursu'd revenge.
I then was young, he plac'd me near his person,
And thought me not dishonour'd by his service.
One day (may that returning day be night,
The stain, the curse of each succeeding year !)
For something, or for nothing, in his pride.
He struck me. (While I tell it, do I live ?)
He smote me on the cheek—I did not stab him,
For that were poor revenge—E'er since, his folly
Has strove to bury it beneath a heap
Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.
Insolent thought ! and like a second blow !
Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless ;
And such alone can wisely drop revenge.

Isa. But with more temper, Zanga, tell your story :
To see your strong emotions startles me.

Zan. Yes, woman, with the temper that befits it.
Has the dark adder venom ? So have I
When trod upon. Proud Spaniard, thou shalt feel me !
For from that day, that day of my dishonour,
I from that day have curs'd the rising sun,
Which never fail'd to tell me of my shame.
I from that day have blest the coming night,
Which promis'd to conceal it ; but in vain ;
The blow return'd for ever in my dream.
Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion
Of ample vengeance ; none is yet arriv'd.
Howe'er at present I conceive warm hopes
Of what may wound him sore, in his ambition,
Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.
By nightly march he purpos'd to surprize
The Moorish camp ; but I have taken care
They shall be ready to receive his favour.

T H E R E V E N G E.

7

Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment
Would darken all the conquests he has won,

Isa. Just as I enter'd an express arriv'd.

Zan. To whom?

Isa. His friend, Don Carlos.

Zan. Be propitious,

Oh, Mahomet, on this important hour,
And give at length my famish'd soul revenge?
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, ' and wisdom to convert
' Other's self-love into our own protection?
But see, the morning dawns;
I'll seek Don Carlos, and enquire my fate.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the Palace.*

Enter Manuel and Don Carlos.

Man. My Lord Don Carlos, what brings your express?

Car. Alonzo's glory, and the Moors defeat.

The field is strew'd with twice ten thousand slain,
Though he suspects his measures were betray'd.
He'll soon arrive. Oh, how I long to embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!—
I lov'd fair Leonora long before
The chance of battle gave me to the Moors,
From whom so late Alonzo set me free;
And while I groan'd in bondage, I depited
This great Alonzo, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love,
To stir her heart, and fan its fires for me.

Man. And what success?

Car. Alas, the cruel maid—

Indeed her father, ' who though high at court,
' And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart,
' To heal his devastation from the Moors,'
Knowing I'm richly freighted from the east,
My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,
(Heav'n guard it safe through such a dreadful storm!)
Careses me, and urges her to wed.

Man. Her aged father, see,
Leads her this way.

Car. She looks like radiant truth,
Brought forward by the hand of hoary time—
You to the port with speed, 'tis possible

Some

Some vessel is arriv'd. Heav'n grant it bring
Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy !

Enter Alvarez and Leonora.

Alv. Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's soft authority,
And earnest counsel.

Car. Angels second you !
For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.

Alv. Daughter, the happiness of life depends
On our discretion, and a prudent choice ;
Look into those they call unfortunate,
And closer view'd, you'll find they are unwise :
Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath,
‘ And 'tis the trick of fools to save their credit,
‘ Which brought another language into use.’
Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood,
And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune.
For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold.
His keels are freighted with that sacred pow'r,
By which ev'n kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wishes, and I hope [To Car.
My daughter is not indispos'd to hear you. [Ex. Alv.

Car. Oh, Leonora ! why art thou in tears ?
Because I am less wretched than I was ?
Before you father gave me leave to woo you,
Hush'd was your bosom, and your eye serene.
‘ Will you for ever help me to new pains,
‘ And keep reserves of torment in your hand,
‘ To let them loose on ev'ry dawn of joy ?’

Leon. Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears ?
A daughter sure may be right dutiful,
Whose tears alone are free from a restraint. —

‘ *Car.* Ah, my torn heart !

‘ *Leon.* Regard not me, my Lord,
‘ I shall obey my father.

‘ *Car.* Disobey him,
‘ Rather than come thus coldly, than come thus
‘ With absent eyes and alienated mien,
‘ Suff'ring address, the victim of my love.
‘ Oh, let me be undone the common way,

‘ And

‘ And have the common comfort to be pity’d,
 ‘ And not be ruin’d in the mask of bliss,
 ‘ And so be envy’d, and be wretched too!
 ‘ Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty,
 ‘ Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of,
 ‘ Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life,
 ‘ Those hills of driven snow, which seen are felt ;
 ‘ All these possess’d, are nought, but as they are
 ‘ The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
 ‘ And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

‘ *Leon.* Alas, my Lord, we are too delicate ;

‘ And when we grasp the happiness we wish’d,
 ‘ We call on wit to argue it away :

‘ A plainer man would not feel half your pains :

‘ But some have too much wisdom to be happy.’

‘ *Car.* Had I known this before, it had been well :

I had not then solicited your father

To add to my distress ; as you behave,

Your father’s kindness stabs me to the heart.

Give me your hand — Nay, give it, *Leonora* :

‘ You give it not — nay, yet you give it not —

‘ I ravish it. — ’

‘ *Leon.* I pray, my Lord, no more.

‘ *Car.* Ah, why so sad ? You know each sigh does shake

‘ Sighs there, are tempests here. — — —

[me :

‘ I’ve heard, bad men would be unblest in heav’n :

‘ What is my guilt, that makes me so with you ?

Have I not languish’d prostrate at thy feet ?

Have I not liv’d whole days upon thy sight ?

Have I not seen thee where thou hast not been ?

And, mad with the idea, clasp’d the wind,

And doated upon nothing ?

‘ *Leon.* Court me not,

Good Carlos, by recounting of my faults,

And telling how ungrateful I have been.

Alas, my Lord, if talking would prevail,

I could suggest much better arguments

Than those regards you threw away on me ;

Your valour, honour, wisdom, prais’d by all.

But bid physicians talk our veins to temper,

And with an argument new-set a pulse ;

Then think, my Lord, of reasoning into love.

Car.

Car. Must I despair then? Do not shake me thus :
 My tempest-beaten heart is cold to death.
 Ah! turn, and let me warm me in thy beauties.
 Heav'ns! what a proof I gave but two nights past
 Of matchless love! To fling me at thy feet,
 I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame;
 Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle :
 But darting headlong to thy arms, I left
 The promis'd fight, I left Alonzo too
 To stand the war, and quell a world alone. [Trumpets.]

Leon. The victor comes. My Lord, I must withdraw.

‘ *Car.* And must you go ?

‘ *Leon.* Why should you wish me stay ?

- Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
- My presence none; it pains you and myself;
- For both our sakes permit me to withdraw.’ [Ex. Leon.]

Car. Sure, there's no peril but in love. ‘ Oh, how

- My foes would boast to see me look so pale !’

Enter Alonzo.

Car. Alonzo !

Alon. Carlos! — I am whole again ;
 Clasp'd in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

Car. Whom dare I thus embrace? The conqueror
 Of Afric.

Alon. Yes, much more Don Carlos' friend.
 The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
 Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
 I rise in virtues to come nearer thee.
 I conquer with Don Carlos in my eye,
 And thus I claim my victory's reward. [Embracing him.]

Car. A victory indeed! your godlike arm
 Has made one spot the grave of Africa,
 Such numbers fell! and the survivors fled
 As frightened passengers from off the strand,
 When the tempestuous sea comes roaring on them.

Alon. 'Twas Carlos conquer'd, 'twas his cruel chains
 Inflam'd me to a rage unknown before,
 And threw my former actions far behind.

Car. I love fair Leonora. How I love her!
 Yet still I find (I know not how it is)
 Another heart, another soul for thee.
 ‘ Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports

‘ Like

Like music, pure the joy, without allay,
 Whose very rapture is tranquility :
 But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
 Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleasures ;
 But mingles pangs and madnes in the bowl.'

Enter Zanga.

Zan. Manuel, my Lord, returning from the port,
 On busines both of moment and of haste,
 Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.

Car. In private ! — Ha ! — Alonzo, I'll return,
 No busines can detain me long from thee. [Ex. Car.]

Zan. My Lord Alonzo, I obey'd your orders.

Alon. Will the fair Leonora pass this way ?

Zan. She will, my Lord, and soon.

Alon. Come near me, Zanga ;
 For I dare open all my heart to thee.
 Never was such a day of triumph known.
 There's not a wounded captive in my train,
 That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
 With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
 But is a god to me : I am most wretched.
 In his captivity, thou know'st Don Carlos,
 My friend, (and never was a friend more dear)
 Deputed me his advocate in love,
 To talk to Leonora's heart, and make
 A tender party in her thoughts for him.
 What did I do ? I lov'd myself. Indeed,
 One thing there is might lessen my offence,
 (If such offence admits of being lessen'd)
 I thought him dead ; for (by what fate I know not)
 His letters never reach'd me.

Zan. Thanks to Zanga,
 Whothence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd. [Aside.]

Alon. Yes, curs'd of heav'n ! I lov'd myself, and now
 In a late action, rescu'd from the Moors,
 I have brought home my rival in my friend.

Zan. We hear, my Lord, that in that action too,
 Your interposing arm preserv'd his life.

Alon. It did — with more than the expence of mine ;
 For, Oh, this day is mention'd for their nuptials.
 But see, she comes — I'll take my leave, and die.

Zan. Hadst thou a thousand lives, thy death would
 please me. Un-

Unhappy fate ! My country overcome !
 My six years hope of vengeance quite expir'd ! —
 Would nature were — I will not fall alone :
 But others' groans shall tell the world my death. [Exit.

Enter Leonora.

Alon. When nature ends with anguish like to this,
 Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
 And bid his light adieu.

Leon. The mighty conqueror
 Dismay'd ! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.

Alon. Oh, cruel insult ! are those tears your sport,
 Which nothing but a love for you could draw ?
 Africk I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
 Your leave to sigh unscorn'd ; but I complain not ;
 'Twas but a world, and you are — Leonora.

Leon. That passion which you boast of is your guilt,
 A treason to your friend. You think mean of me,
 To plead your crimes as motives of my love.

Alon. You, Madam, ought to thank those crimes you
 'Tis they permit you to be thus inhuman, [blame ;
 Without the censure both of earth and heav'n —
 I fondly thought a last look might be kind.
 Farewel for ever. — This severe behaviour
 Has, to my comfort, made it sweet to die.

Leon. Farewel for ever ! — Sweet to die ! — Oh, heav'n ! [Aside.

Alonzo, stay, you must not thus escape me ;
 But hear your guilt at large.

Alon. Oh, Leonora !
 What could I do ? In duty to my friend,
 I saw you ; and to see, is to admire.
 For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely.
 Witness the thousand agonies it cost me.
 You know I did. I sought but your esteem ;
 If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty.
 ' I often sigh'd, nay, wept, but could not help it ;
 ' And sure it is no crime to be in pain.
 ' But grant my crime was great ; I'm greatly curs'd :
 ' What would you more ? Am I not most undone ?
 ' This usage is like stamping on the murder'd,
 ' When life is fled ; most barbarous and unjust.'

Leon. If from your guilt none suffer'd but your self,
 It might be so — Farewel. [Going.

Alon.

THE REVENGE.

35

Alon. Who suffers with me?

Leon. Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.

‘ *Alon.* Alas ! what is there I can fear to know,
Since I already know your hate ? Your actions

‘ Have long since told me that.

‘ *Leon.* They flatter’d you.

‘ *Alon.* How, flatter’d me !

‘ *Leon.* Oh, search in fate no farther !

‘ I hate thee—Oh, Alonzo, how I hate thee !

‘ *Alon.* Indeed ! and do you weep for hatred too ?

‘ Oh, what a doubtful torment heaves my heart !

‘ I hope it most, and yet I dread it more.

‘ Should it be so ; should her tears flow from thence,

‘ How would my soul blaze up in ecstasy !

‘ Ah, no ! how sink into the depth of horrors !

‘ *Leon.* Why would you force my stay ?

Alon. What mean these tears ?

Leon. I weep by chance ; nor have my tears a meaning.

But, Oh, when first I saw Alonzo’s tears,

I knew their meaning well !

[*Alon.* falls passionately on his knees, and takes her hand.

Alon. Heavens ! what is this ? That excellence, for

Desire was planted in the heart of man ; [which

Virtue’s supreme reward on this side heav’n ;

The cordial of my soul—and this destroys me—

Indeed, I flatter’d me that thou didst hate.

Leon. Alonzo, pardon me the injury

Of loving you. I struggled with my passion,

And struggled long : let that be some excuse.

Alon. Unkind ! you know I think your love a blessing

Beyond all human blessings ; 'tis the price

Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying.

But, Oh, the curse of curses !—Oh, my friend !—

Leon. Alas !

Alon. What says my love ? Speak, Leonora.

Leon. Was it for you, my Lord, to be so quick

In finding out objections to our love ?

Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,

It was unsafe to leave that part to me ?

Alon. Is not the day then fix’d for your espousals ?

Leon. Indeed my father once had thought that way ;
But marking how the marriage pain’d my heart,

Long he stood doubtful ; but at last resolv'd,
Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.

Alon. Oh, agony !
Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument ? Not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself ?
This is refining on calamity.

Leon. What, do you tremble lest you should be mine ?
For what else can you tremble ? Not for that
My father places in your power to alter.

Alon. What's in my pow'r ? Oh, yes, to stab my friend !
Leon. To stab your friend were barbarous indeed !

Spare him—and murder me. ' I own, Alonzo,
' You well may wonder at such words as these ;
' I start at them myself ; they fright my nature.
' Great is my fault ; but blame not me alone :
' Give him a little blame who took such pains
' To make me guilty.

' *Alon.* Torment ! [After a pause, *Leon.* speaks.]

' *Leon.* Oh, my shame !
' I sue, and sue in vain : it is most just,
' When women sue, they sue to be deny'd.
' You hate me, you despise me ! you do well ;
' For what I've done I hate and scorn myself.
' Oh, night, fall on me ! I shall blush to death.'

Alon. First perish all !

' *Leon.* Say, what have you resolv'd ?
' My father comes ; what answer will you give him ?
' *Alon.* What answer ! let me look upon that face,
' And read it there—Devote thee to another !
' Not to be borne ! a second look undoes me.

' *Leon.* And why undo you ? Is it then, my Lord,
' So terrible to yield to your own wishes,
' Because they happen to concur with mine ?
' Cruel ! to take such pains to win an heart,
' Which you was conscious you must break with parting.
' *Alon.* No, Leonora, I am thine for ever,

[Runs and embraces her.]
In spite of Carlos—' Ha ! who's that ? My friend ?
' *Starts wide from her.*
' Alas, I see him pale ! I hear his groan !

' He

- ‘ He foams, he tears his hair, he raves, he bleeds,
- ‘ (I know him by myself) he dies distracted !
- ‘ *Leon.* How dreadful to be cut from what we love !
- ‘ *Alon.* Ah, speak no more !
- ‘ *Leon.* And ty’d to what we hate !
- ‘ *Alon.* Oh !
- ‘ *Leon.* Is it possible ?
- ‘ *Alon.* Death !
- ‘ *Leon.* Can you ?
- ‘ *Alon.* Oh —
- ‘ Yes, take a limb ; but let my virtue 'scape.
- ‘ Alas, my soul, this moment I die for thee !

[Breaks away.]

- ‘ *Leon.* And are you perjur’d then for virtue’s sake ?
- ‘ How often have you sworn ! — but go, for ever. [Swoons.]
- ‘ *Alon.* Heart of my heart, and essence of my joy !
- ‘ Where art thou ! — Oh, I’m thine, and thine for ever !
- ‘ The groans of friendship shall be heard no more.
- ‘ For whatsoever crime I can commit,
- ‘ I’ve felt the pains already.’

Leon. Hold, *Alonzo*,

And hear a maid whom doubly thou hast conquer’d.
 I love thy virtue as I love thy person,
 And I adore thee for the pains it gave me ;
 But as I felt the pains, I’ll reap the fruit ;
 I’ll shine out in my turn, and shew the world
 Thy great example was not lost upon me.

- ‘ Be it enough that I have once been guilty ;
- ‘ In sight of such a pattern, to persist,
- ‘ Ill suits a person honour’d with your love.
- ‘ My other titles to that bliss are weak ;
- ‘ I must deserve it by refusing it.
- ‘ Thus then I tear me from thy hopes for ever.
- ‘ Shall I contribute to *Alonzo*’s crimes ?
- ‘ No, tho’ the life-blood gushes from my heart.
- ‘ You shall not be ashame’d of *Leonora* ;
- ‘ Or that late time may put our names together.’

Nay, never shrink ; take back the bright example
 You lately lent ; Oh, take it while you may,
 While I can give it you, and be immortal !

[Exit.]

Alon. She’s gone, and I shall see that face no more ;
 But pine in absence, and till death adore.

When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
 And my eyes darken, from my fault'ring tongue
 Her name will tremble with a feeble moan,
 And love with fate divide my dying groan.

[Exit.]

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T - II,

S C E N E, *continues.*

Enter. Manuel and Zanga.

ZANGA.

IF this be true, I cannot blame your pain
 For wretched Carlos ; 'tis but humane in you,
 But when arriv'd your dismal news ?

Man. This hour.*Zan.* What, not a vessel sav'd ?*Man.* All, all the storm

Devour'd ; and now o'er his late envy'd fortune
 The dolphins bound, and wat'ry mountains roar,
 Triumphant in his ruin.

Zan. Is Alvarez

Determin'd to deny his daughter to him ?
 That treasure was on shore ; must that too join
 The common wreck ?

Man. Alvarez pleads, indeed,
 That Leonora's heart is disinclin'd,
 And pleads that only ; so it was this morning,
 When he concurr'd : the tempest broke the match ;
 And funk his favour, when it funk the gold.
 The love of gold is double in his heart,
 The vice of age, and of Alvarez too.

Zan. How does Don Carlos bear it ?*Man.* Like a man

Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
 And reasons best a human heart can reason.

Zan. But is he then in absolute despair ?*Man.* Never to see his Leonora more.

And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
 Urges Alonzo to espouse his daughter
 This very day ; for he has learnt their loves.

Zan.

Zan. Ha ! was not that receiv'd with ecstasy
By Don Alonzo ?

Man. Yes, at first ; but soon
A damp came o'er him, it would kill his friend.

Zan. Not if his friend consented : and since now
He can't himself espouse her —

Man. Yet, to ask it
Has something shocking to a generous mind ;
At least, Alonzo's spirit startles at it.
Wide is the distance between our despair,
And giving up a mistress to another.
But I must leave you. Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction.

[Exit Manuel.]

Zan. Ha, it dawns ! —
It rises to me, like a new-found world
To mariners long time distress'd at sea,
Sore from a storm, and all their viands spent ;
Or like the sun just rising out of chaos,
Some dregs of ancient night not quite purg'd off.
But shall I finish it ? — Hoa, Isabella !

Enter Isabella.

I thought of dying ; better things come forward ;
Vengeance is still alive ; from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.
When, Isabella, arriv'd Don Carlos here ?

Isab. Two nights ago.

Zan. That was the very night
Before the battle — Memory, set down that ;
It has the essence of the crocodile,
Tho' yet but in the shell — I'll give it birth —
What time did he return ?

Isab. At midnight.

Zan. So —

Say, did he see that night his Leonora ?

Isab. No, my good Lord.

Zan. No matter — tell me, woman,
Is not Alonzo rather brave than cautious,
Honest than subtle, above fraud himself,
Slow, therefore to suspect it in another ?

Isab. You best can judge ; but so the world thinks
of him.

Zan. Why, that was well—go, fetch my tablets hither.

[Exit Isab.]

Two nights ago my father's sacred shade
 Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smil'd upon me ;
 He smil'd a joy then little understood—
 It must be so—and if so, it is vengeance
 Worth waking of the dead for.

Re-enter Isabella with the tablets ; Zanga writes, then reads
 as to himself.

Thus it stands—
 The father's fix'd—Don Carlos cannot wed—
 Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend—
 Nor can he ask his leave—or, if he did,
 He might not gain it—It is hard to give
 Our own consent to ills, tho' we must bear them.
 Were it not then a master-piece, worth all
 The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade
 Alonzo to request it of his friend,
 His friend to grant—then from that very grant,
 The strongest proof of friendship man can give,
 (And other motives) to work out a cause
 Of jealousy, to rack Alonzo's peace ?—
 I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of human woes,
 Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal.
 It is the Hydra of calamities,
 The seven-fold death ; the jealous are the damn'd.
 Oh, jealousy, each other passion's calm.
 To thee, thou conflagration of the soul !
 Thou king of torments, thou grand counterpoise.
 For all the transports beauty can inspire !

Isab. Alonzo comes this way.

Zan. Most opportunely.

Withdraw—‘ Ye subtle dæmons, which reside ’ [Ex. Is.
 ‘ In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
 ‘ That little engin’ry, more mischievous,
 ‘ Than fleets and armies, and the cannon’s murder,
 ‘ Teach me to look a lie ; give me your maze
 ‘ Of gloomy thought and intricate design,
 ‘ To catch the man I hate, and then devour.’

Enter Alonzo.

My Lord, I give you joy.

Alon. Of what good Zanga ?

Zan. Is not the lovely Leonora yours ?

Alon.

Alon. What will become of Carlos?

Zan. He's your friend;

And since he can't espouse the fair himself,
Will take some comfort from Alonzo's fortune.

Alon. Alas, thou little know'st the force of love!
Love reigns a sultan with unrivall'd sway;
Puts all relations, friendship's self to death,
If once he's jealous of it. I love Carlos;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning
At his intended nuptials. For myself
I then felt pains which now for him I feel.

Zan. You will not wed her then?

Alon. Not instantly.

Insult his broken heart the very moment!

Zan. I understand you: but you'll wed hereafter,
When your friend's gone, and his first pain assuag'd.

Alon. Am I to blame for that?

Zan. My Lord, I love

Your very errors; they are born from virtue.
Your friendship (and what nobler passion claims
The heart?) does lead you blindfold to your ruin.
Consider, wherefore did Alvarez break
Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonzo's?
'Twas the same cause, the love of wealth. To-morrow
May see Alonzo in Don Carlos' fortune;
A higher bidder is a better friend,
And there are princes figh for Leonora.
When your friend's gone you'll wed; why, then the cause
Which gives you Leonora now will cease.
Carlos has lost her; should you lose her too,
Why, then you heap new torments on your friend,
By that respect which labour'd to relieve him—
'Tis well he is disturb'd; it makes him pause. [Aside.]

Alon. Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask Don Carlos,
His goodness would consent that I should wed her?

Zan. I know it would.

Alon. But then the cruelty

To ask it, and for me to ask it of him!

Zan. Methinks, you are severe upon your friend.
Who was it gave him liberty and life?

Alon. That is the very reason which forbids it.
Were I a stranger, I could freely speak:

In me it so resembles a demand,
Exacting of a debt, it shocks my nature.

Zan. My Lord, you know the sad alternative.
Is Leonora worth one pang or not ?
It hurts not me, my Lord, but as I love you :
Warmly as you I wish Don Carlos well ;
But I am likewise Don Alonzo's friend :
There all the difference lies between us two.
In me, my Lord, you hear another self ;
And give me leave to add, a better too,
Clear'd from those errors, which, tho' caus'd by virtue,
Are such as may hereafter give you pain —
Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.

Alon. Perish the name ! What, sacrifice the fair
To age and ugliness, because set in gold ?
I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me.
I have not seen him since his sore affliction ;
But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear.
How shall I bear it now ? I'm struck already. [Exit.]

Zan. Half of my work is done. I must secure
Don Carlos, ere Alonzo speak with him.

[*He gives a message to a servant, then returns.*]
Proud, hated Spain, oft drench'd in Moorish blood !
Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee ?
Shake not the tow'rs where-e'er I pass along,
Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer ?
Shake to the centre, if Alonzo's dear.
Look down, Oh, holy prophet ! see me torture
This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares
To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law ;
And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,
Which look as they were lighted up for thee !
Shall he enjoy thy Paradise below ?
Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her charms ! —
But see, the melancholy lover comes.

Enter Don Carlos.

Car. Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years : vile promiser !
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wise ; and I wasn't fool enough
To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow ;
Nor have I wisdom to elaborate

An artificial happiness from pains :

Ev'n joys are pains, because they cannot last.

[Sighs.]

‘ Yet much is talk'd of bliss ; it is the art
 ‘ Of such as have the world in their possession,
 ‘ To give it a good name, that fools may envy ;
 ‘ For envy to small minds is flattery.’

How many lift the head, look gay, and smile
 Against their consciences ? And this we know,
 Yet, knowing, disbelieve, and try again
 What we have try'd, and struggle with conviction.
 Each new experience gives the former credit ;
 And reverend grey threescore is but a voucher,
 That thirty told us true.

Zan. My noble Lord,

I mourn your fate : but are no hopes surviving ?

Car. No hopes. Alvarez has a heart of steel.
 ’Tis fix'd, ’tis past, ’tis absolute despair.

Zan. You wanted not to have your heart made tender,
 By your own pains to feel a friend's distress.

Car. I understand you well. Alonzo loves ;
 I pity him.

Zan. I dare be sworn you do.

Yet he has other thoughts.

Car. What canst thou mean ?

Zan. Indeed he has ; and fears to ask a favour
 A stranger from a stranger might request ;
 What costs you nothing, yet is all to him ;
 Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
 For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

Car. I pray be plain ; his happiness is mine.

Zan. He loves to death ; but so reveres his friend
 He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid
 Without your leave, and that he fears to ask.
 In perfect tenderness I urg'd him to it.
 Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
 Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
 Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her,
 I wrung a promise from him he would try :
 And now I come, a mutual friend to both,
 Without his privacy, to let you know it,
 And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

Car.

Car. Ha ! if he weds I am undone indeed ;
Not Don Alvarez' self can then relieve me.

Zan. Alas, my Lord, you know his heart is steel.
'Tis fix'd, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair.

Car. Oh, cruel Heav'n ! and is it not enough
That I must never, never see her more ?
Say, is it not enough that I must die ;
But I must be tormented in the grave ?—
Ask my consent !—Must I then give her to him ?
Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid ?
Oh ! — Leonora ! never, never, never !

Zan. A storm of plagues upon him ! he refuses. [*Aside.*]

Car. What, wed her ?—and to-day ?

Zan. To-day, or never.

To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,
And then Alonzo is thrown out like you :
Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune ?
Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.

Car. Oh, torment ! whither shall I turn ?

Zan. To peace.

Car. Which is the way ?

Zan. His happiness is yours ;
I dare not disbelieve you.

Car. Kill my friend !

Or worse—Alas ! and can there be a worse ?

A worse there is ; nor can my nature bear it.

Zan. You have convinc'd me 'tis a dreadful task.
I find Alonzo's quitting her this morning
For Carlos' sake, in tenderneſs to you,
Betray'd me to believe it less severe
'Than I perceive it is.

Car. Thou dost upbraid me.

Zan. No, my good Lord ; but since you can't comply,
'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it ;
For had I not, Alonzo would indeed
Have dy'd, as now, but not by your decree.

Car. By my decree ! Do I decree his death ?
I do—Shall I then lead her to his arms ?
Oh, which ſide ſhall I take ? Be ſtabb'd, or—stab ?
'Tis equal death ! a choice of agonies !—
Ah, no ! all other agonies are eafe
To one—Oh, Leonora !—never, never !

Go, Zanga, go, defer the dreadful trial,
Tho' but a day ; something, perchance, may happen
To soften all to friendship and to love.

Go, stop my friend, let me not see him now ;
But save us from an interview of death.

Zan. My Lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you—
If I not bring him, may Alonzo prosper. [Aside. Exit.

Car. What is this world?—Thy school, Oh, Misery !
Our only lesson is to learn to suffer ;

And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.

‘ Tho' deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,
‘ My comfort is, each moment takes away
‘ A grain, at least from the dead load that's on me,
‘ And gives a nearer prospect of the grave.’

But put it most severely—should I live—

Live long—Alas, there is no length in time !

Nor in thy time, Oh, man ! What's fourscore years ?

Nay, what, indeed, the age of time itself,

Since cut from out eternity's wide round ?

‘ Away, then. To a mind resolv'd and wise,

‘ There is an impotence in misery,

‘ Which makes me smile, when all its shafts are in me.’

Yet Leonora—she can make time long,

Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine.

While in the lustre of her charms I lay,

Whole summer suns roll'd unperceiv'd away ;

I years for days, and days for moments told,

And was surpris'd to hear that I grew old,

Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,

And every moment is an age of pain.

As he is going out, enter Zanga and Alonzo. Zanga
stops Carlos.

Zan. Is this Don Carlos ? this the boasted friend ?
How can you turn your back upon his sadness ?

Look on him, and then leave him if you can.

‘ Whose sorrows thus depress him ? Not his own ;

‘ This moment he could wed without your leave.’

Car. I cannot yield ; nor can I bear his griefs.

Alonzo ! [Going to him, and taking his hand.

Alon. Oh, Carlos !

Car. Pray, forbear.

Alon. Art thou undone, and shall Alonzo smile ?

Alonzo,

Alonzo, who perhaps in some degree
 Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate ?
 I was deputed guardian of thy love ;
 But, Oh, I lov'd myself ! Pour down afflictions
 On this devoted head ; make me your mark ;
 And be the world by my example taught,
 How sacred it should hold the name of friend.

Car. You charge yourself unjustly ; well I know
 The only cause of my severe affliction.

Alvarez, curs'd Alvarez !—So much anguish
 Felt for so small a failure, is one merit
 Which faultless virtue wants. The crime was mine,
 Who plac'd thee there, where only thou couldst fail ;
 Tho' well I knew that dreadful post of honour
 I gave thee to maintain. Ah ! who could bear
 Those eyes unhurt ? The wounds myself have felt,
 (Which wounds alone should cause me to condemn thee)
 They plead in thy excuse ; for I too strove
 To shun those fires, and found 'twas not in man.

Alon. You cast in shades the failures of a friend,
 And soften all ; but think not you deceive me ;
 I know my guilt, and I implore your pardon,
 As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

Car. Pardon for him, who but this morning threw
 Fair Leonora from his heart, all bath'd
 In ceaseless tears, and blushing for her love !
 Who, like a rose-leaf wet with morning dew,
 Would have stuck close, and clung for ever there !
 But 'twas in thee, thro' fondness for thy friend,
 To shut thy bosom against ecstacies ;
 For which, while this pulse beats, it beats to thee ;
 While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonzo,
 And every wish is levell'd at thy joy. [to speak.]

Zan. [To Alon.] My Lord, my Lord, this is your time

Alon. [To Zan.] Because he's kind ? It therefore is the
 For 'tis his kindness which I fear to hurt. [worst ;
 Shall the same moment see him sink in woes, —
 And me providing for a flood of joys,
 Rich in the plunder of his happiness ?
 No, I may die ; but I can never speak.
 —*Car.* Now, now it comes ! they are concerting it ;
 The first word strikes me dead—Oh, Leonora !

• And

• And shall another taste her fragrant breath?
 • Who knows what after-time may bring to pass?
 • Fathers may change and I may wed her still. [Aside.
 • *Alon.* [To Zan.] Do I not see him quite possess'd
 with anguish,
 • Which, like a daemone, writhes him to and fro?
 And shall I pour in new? No fond desire,
 No love: one pang at parting, and farewell.
 I have no other love but Carlos now.

Car. Alas! my friend, why with such eager grasp
 Dost press my hand, and weep upon my cheek?

Alon. If after death our forms (as some believe)
 Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
 And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,
 Thou'l know one day that thou wast held most dear.
 Farewel.

Car. Alonzo, stay—he cannot speak— [Holds him.
 Lest it should grieve me—Shall I be out-done?
 And lose in glory, as I lose in love? [Aside.
 I take it much unkindly, my Alonzo,
 You think so meanly of me, not to speak,
 When well I know your heart is near to bursting.
 Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
 Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

Alon. There, there it is, my friend, it cuts me there.
 How dreadful is it to a generous mind
 To ask, when sure he cannot be deny'd!

Car. How greatly thought! In all he tow'rs above me. [Aside.
 Then you confess you would ask something of me?

Alon. No, on my soul,

Zan. [To Alon.] Then lose her.

Car. Glorious spirit!
 Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
 By Heav'n, I envy him his agonies.
 • Why was not mine the most illustrious lot,
 • Of starting at one action from below,
 • And flaming up into consummate greatness?
 • Ha! angels strengthen me!—It shall be so—
 • I can't want strength. Great actions, once conceiv'd,
 • Strengthen like wine, and animate the soul,
 • And call themselves to being. [Aside.] My Alonzo!
 Since thy great soul disdains to make request,

Receive with favour that I make to thee;

Alon. What means my Carlos?

Car. Pray observe me well.

Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart,
And plucking up my love, they had well nigh
Pluck'd up life too, for they were twin'd together.
Of that no more—What now does reason bid?

I cannot wed—Farewel my happiness!

But, O my soul, with care provide for hers!

In life, how weak, how helpless is woman!

• Soon hurt; in happiness itself unsafe,
• And often wounded while she plucks the rose;
• So properly the object of affliction;
• That Heav'n is pleas'd to make distress become her,
• And dresses her most amiably in tears.

Take then my heart in dowry with the fair,
Be thou her guardian, and thou must be mine,
Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
With thy surrounding arms—Do this, and then
Set down the liberty and life thou gav'st me,
As little things; as essays of thy goodness,
And rudiments of friendship so divine.

Alon. There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,
Which with thy foes would render thee ador'd.

• But have a care, nor think I can be pleas'd
• With any thing that lays in pains for thee.
• Thou dost dissemble, and thy heart's in tears.

• *Car.* My heart's in health, my spirits dance their round,
• And at my eyes pleasure looks out in smiles.

• *Alon.* And can't thou, can't thou part with Leonora?

Car. I do not part with her, I give her thee.

Alon. O, Carlos!

• *Car.* Don't disturb me, I'm sincere,
• Nor is it more than simple justice in me.
• This morn didst thou resign her for my sake;
• I but perform a virtue learnt from thee;
• Discharge a debt, and pay her to thy wishes.

• *Alon.* Ah, how?—But think not words were ever made
For such occasions. Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence; I'll seek relief
In absence from the pain of so much goodness,
There thank the blest above, thy sole superiors,
Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee.

[Exit.
Zan.

Zan. Thus far success has crown'd my boldest hope.
 My next care is to hasten these new nuptials,
 And then my master-works begin to play. [Aside.]
 Why this was greatly done, without one sigh. [To Car.]
 To carry such a glory to its period.

Car. Too soon thou praisest me. He's gone, and now
 I must unsluice my over-burthen'd heart,
 And let it flow. I would not grieve my friend
 With tears; nor interrupt my great design;
 Great sure as ever human breast durst think of.
 But now my sorrows, long with pain supprest,
 Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
 O'er-swell all bounds, and bear e'en life away.
 So till the day was won, the Greek renown'd
 With anguish wot'd the arrow in his wound,
 Then drew the shaft from out his tortur'd side,
 Let gush the torrent of his blood, and dy'd. [Exit.]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Zanga.

ZANGA.

O Joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three years
 I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
 It warms my veins, and plays around my heart:
 A fiery instinct lifts me from the ground,
 And I could mount—the spirits numberless
 Of my dear countrymen, which yesterday
 Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
 Are all assembled here, and o'er-inform me.—
 O, bridegroom! great indeed thy present bliss;
 Yet ev'n by me unenvy'd; for be sure
 It is thy last, thy last smile, that which now
 Sits on thy cheek; enjoy it while thou may'st;
 Anguish, and groans, and death bespeak to-morrow.

Enter Isabella.

My Isabella!

Isab. What commands my Moor?

Zan. My fair ally! my lovely minister!
 'Twas well Alvarez, by my arts impell'd,

(To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation)-
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolv'd them ;
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forg'd
That letter, which I trusted to thy hand :
That letter, which in glowing terms conveys,
From happy Carlos to fair Leonora,
The most profound acknowledgment of heart,
For wond'rous transports which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

Isab. I quickly dropt it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

Zan. With a lucky hand ;
For soon Alonzo found it ; I observ'd him
From out my secret stand. He took it up ;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Started, and trembling dropt it on the ground.
Pale and aghast a while my victim stood,
Disguis'd a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him ;
Then rubb'd his brow, and took it up again.
At first he look'd as if he meant to read it ;
But check'd by rising fears, he crush'd it thus,
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

Isab. But if he read it not, it cannot sting him,
At least not mortally.

Zan. At first I thought so ;
But farther thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account.
‘ He more shall credit it, because unseen,
‘ (It ’tis unseen) as thou anon may’st find.

‘ *Isab.* That would indeed commend my Zanga’s skill.

Zan. This, Isabella, is Don Carlos’ picture ;
Take it, and so dispose of it, that found,
It may raise up a witness of her love ;
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere as shall best promote our end.

Isab. I’ll weigh it as its consequence requires,
Then do my utinest to deserve your smile.

[Exit.
Zan.

Zan. Is that Alonzo prostrate on the ground?—
Now he starts up like flame from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fulness of the tempest tear him?

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. And yet it cannot be—I am deceiv'd—
I injure her: she wears the face of heav'n.

Zan. He doubts.

Alon. I dare not look on this again. [Aside.]
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.

Alon. It cannot—Ha! it must, it must be true. [Starts.]

Zan. Hold there, and we succeed. He has descry'd me.
And (for he thinks I love him) will unfold,
His aching heart, and rest it on my counsel.
I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure. [Aside.]

Alon. Hold, Zanga, turn.

Zan. My Lord.

Alon. Shut close the doors,
That not a spirit find an entrance here.

Zan. My Lord's obey'd.

Alon. I see that thou art frightened.
If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions stings,

Zan. If I do love, my Lord?

Alon. Come near me, let me rest upon thy bosom;
(What pillow like the bosom of a friend?)
For I am sick at heart.

Zan. Speak, Sir, O speak,
And take me from the rack.

‘ *Alon.* And is there need

‘ Of words? Behold a wonder! See my tears!

‘ *Zan.* I feel 'em too. Heav'n grant my senses fail me!

‘ I rather would lose them, than have this real.

‘ *Alon.* Go, take a round thro' all things in thy thought,

‘ And find that one; for there is only one

‘ Which could extort my tears; find that, and tell

‘ Thyself my misery, and spare me the pain.

‘ *Zan.* Sorrow can think but ill—I am bewilder'd;

‘ I know not where I am.

Alon. Think, think no more: it ne'er can enter in an honest heart!
 I'll tell thee then—I cannot—yet I do
 By wanting force to give it utterance.
 Zan. Speak, ease your heart; its throbs will break
 your bosom.

Alon. I am most happy: mine is victory,
 Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
 And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
 O curse of curses! in the lap of blessing—
 To be most curst!—My Leonora's false!

Zan. Save me, my Lord!

Alon. My Leonora's false! [Gives him the letter.]

Zan. Then heav'n has lost its image here on earth.

[While Zanga reads the letter, he trembles, and shews the
 utmost concern.]

Alon. Good-natur'd man! he makes my pains his own.
 I durst not read it; but I read it now
 In thy concern.

Zan. Did you not read it then?

Alon. Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear no more.

Zan. Thus perish all that gives Alonzo pain! [Tears the letter.]

Alon. Why didst thou tear it?

Zan. Think of it no more. 'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your fears.

Alon. And didst thou tremble then for my mistake?
 Or give the whole contents, or by the pangs
 That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

Zan. Is this Alonzo's language to his Zanga?
 Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here.
 For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it?
 Wherefore this rage? Because I seek your peace?
 I have no interest in suppressing it,
 But what good-natur'd tenderness for you
 Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart
 That will be rent in two. Not mine the fame
 That will be damn'd, tho' all the world should know it.

Alon. Then my worst fears are true, and life is past.

Zan. What has the rashness of my passion utter'd?
 I know not what; but rage is our destruction,
 And all its words are wind—Yet sure, I think,
 I nothing own'd—but grant I did confess,

What is a letter? letters may be forg'd:
 For heav'n's sweet sake, my Lord, lift up your heart.
 Some foe to your repose—

Alon. So, heav'n look on me,
 As I can't find the man I have offended. [shield :

Zan. Indeed! [Aside.] — Our innocence is not our
 They take offence, who have not been offended;
 They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair,
 And death is often ambush'd in their smiles.

‘ We know not whom we have to fear.’ 'Tis certain
 A letter may be forg'd, and in a point
 Of such a dreadful consequence as this,
 One would rely on nought that might be false—
 Think, have you any other cause to doubt her?
 Away, you can find none. Resume your spirit;
 All's well again.

Alon. O that it were!

Zan. It is;

For who would credit that, which credited,
 Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
 Without such proofs as cannot be withstood;
 Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?
 Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,
 Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?

Alon. O, Zanga! it is that confounds me most,
 That full in opposition to appearance—

Zan. No more, my Lord, for you condemn yourself.
 What is absurdity, but to believe
 Against appearance! — You can't yet, I find,
 Subdue your passion to your better sense; —
 And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me.
 'Tis fit our indiscretions should be check'd
 With some degree of pain.

Alon. What indiscretion?

Zan. Come, you must bear to hear your faults from me.
 Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court
 The night before the battle, that foul slave,
 Who forg'd the senseless scroll which gives you pain,
 Had wanted footing for his villainy.

Alon. I sent him not.

Zan. Not send him! — Ha! — That strikes me.
 I thought he came on message to the king.

Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promis'd fight ?
But I perhaps may think too rigidly ;
So long an absence, and impatient love —

Alon. In my confusion that had quite escap'd me,
By Heav'n, my wounded soul does bleed afresh ;
'Tis clear as day — for Carlos is so brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,
And is enamour'd of the face of death.
How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the transports ? — Oh, it must be so —
Inhuman ! by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend !

Zan. You wrong him ;
He knew not of your love.

Alon. Ha ! —

Zan. That stings home.

[Aside.]

Alon. Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous love —
Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest.
‘ Th' eternal law of things declares it true,
‘ Which calls for judgment on distinguish'd guilt,
‘ And loves to make our crime our punishment.’
Love is my torture, love was first my crime ;
For she was his, my friend's, and he (O horror !)
Confided all in me. O, sacred faith !
How dearly I abide thy violation !

Zan. Were then their loves far gone ?

Alon. The father's will
There bore a total sway ; and he, as soon
As news arriv'd that Carlos' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fir'd with the love of gold,
Determin'd, that the very sun which saw
Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.

Zan. Indeed, my Lord ; then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime.
Consider, strong allurements soften guilt ;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day destin'd
For his espousals — 'twas a strong temptation.

Alon. Temptation !

Zan. 'Twas but gaining of one night.

Alon. One night !

Zan.

Zan. That crime could ne'er return again.

Alon. Again ! By heav'n, thou dost insult thy Lord. Temptation ! One night gain'd ! O stings and death ! And am I then undone ? Alas, my Zanga ! And dost thou own it too ? Deny it still, And rescue me one moment from distraction.

Zan. My Lord, I hope the best.

Alon. False, foolish hope, ' And insolent to me ! ' Thou know'st it false ; It is as glaring as the noon-tide sun. Devil !—This morning, after three years coldness, To rush at once into a passion for me ! 'Twas time to feign, 'twas time to get another, When her first fool was fated with her beauties.

Zan. What says my Lord ? Did Leonora then Never before disclose her passion for you ?

Alon. Never.

Zan. Throughout the whole three years ?

Alon. O never ! never !

Why, Zanga, should'st thou strive ! 'Tis all in vain : Tho' thy soul labours, it can find no reed For hope to catch at. Ah ! I'm plunging down Ten thousand thousand fathomis in despair.

Zan. Hold, Sir, I'll break your fall—Wave ev'ry fear, And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her, Be most assur'd, he had resign'd her to you With less reluctance.

Alon. Ha ! Resign her to me !—

Resign her !—Who resign'd her ?—Double death ! How could I doubt so long ? 'My heart is broke.' First love her to distraction ! then resign her !

Zan. But was it not with utmost agony ?

Alon. Grant that, he still resign'd her ; that's enough. Would he pluck out his eye to give it me ? Tear out his heart ?—She was his heart no more— Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her ; By heav'n he ask'd, he courted me to wed. I thought it strange ; 'tis now no longer so.

Zan. Was't his request ? Are you right sure of that ? I fear the letter was not all a tale.

Alon. A tale ! There's proof equivalent to sight.

Zan. I should distrust my sight on this occasion.

Alon.

Alon. And so should I ; by heav'n, I think I should. What ! Leonora, the divine, by whom We guess'd at angels ! Oh ! I'm all confusion.

Zan. You now are too much ruffled to think clearly. Since bliss and horror, life and death hang on it, Go to your chamber, there maturely weigh Each circumstance ; consider, above all, That it is jealousy's peculiar nature To swell small things to great ; nay, out of nought To conjure much, and then to lose its reason Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

Alon. Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all To be deceiv'd. ' I fear 'tis doomsday with me.' And yet she seem'd so pure, that I thought heav'n Borrow'd her form for virtue's self to wear, To gain her lovers with the sons of men. O, Leonora ! Leonora !

[Exit.]

Enter Isabella.

Zan. Thus far it works auspiciously. My patient Thrives underneath my hand in misery. He's gone to think ; that is, to be distracted.

Isab. I overheard your conference, and saw you, To my amazement, tear the letter.

Zan. There, There, Isabella, I out-did myself. For tearing it, I not secure it only In its first force ; but superadd a new. For who can now the character examine To cause a doubt, much less detect the fraud ? And after tearing it, as loth to shew The foul contents, if I should swear it now A forgery, my Lord would disbelieve me, Nay, more would disbelieve the more I swore. But is the picture happily dispos'd of ?

Isab. It is.

Zan. That's well—Ah ! what is well ? O pang to think ! O dire necessity ! is this my province ? Whither, my soul ! ah ! whither art thou sunk Beneath thy sphere ? Ere while, far, far above Such little arts, dissembling, falsehoods, frauds, The trash of villainy itself, which falls To cowards and poor wretches wanting bread.

Dose

Does this become a soldier ? This become
 Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd ?
 My martial glory withers at the thought.
 But great my end ; and since there are no other,
 These means are just, they shine with borrow'd light,
 Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.
 And greater sure my merit, who to gain
 A point sublime, can such a task sustain ;
 To wade thro' ways obscene, my honour bend,
 And shock my nature, to attain my end.
 Late time shall wonder ; that my joys will raise ;
 For wonder is involuntary praise.

[Exeunt,

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Enter Alonzo and Zanga.

ALONZO.

O H, what a pain to think ? when every thought,
 Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
 And Reason knits th' inextricable toil,
 In which herself is taken ! ' I am lost,
 ' Poor insect that I am, I am involv'd,
 ' And bury'd in the web myself have wrought !
 ' One argument is balanc'd by another,
 ' And reason reason meets in doubtful fight,
 ' And proofs are countermin'd by equal proofs.'
 No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
 This inward anarchy ; but find my wife,
 And to her trembling heart presenting death,
 Force all the secret from her.

Zan. O forbear !

You totter on the very brink of ruin.

Alon. What dost thou mean ?

Zan. That will discover all,

And kill my hopes. What can I think or do ?

[Aside]

Alon. What dost thou murmur ?

Zan. Force the secret from her !

What's perjury to such a crime as this ?

Will

Will she confess it then ? O groundless hope !
 But rest assur'd, she'll make this accusation,
 Or false or true, your ruin with the king ;
 Such is her father's power.

Alon. No more, I care not ;
 Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.

Zan. But for what better will you change this load ?
 Grant you should know it, would not that be worse ?

Alon. No, it would cure me of my mortal pangs :
 By hatred and contempt I should despise her,
 And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.

Zan. Ah ! were I sure of that, my Lord —

Alon. What then ?

Zan. You should not hazard life to gain the secret.

Alon. What dost thou mean ? Thou know'st I'm on the
 I'll not be play'd with ; speak, if thou hast ought, [rake.
 Or I this instant fly to Leonora.

Zan. That is, to death. My Lord, I am not yet
 Quite so far gone in guilt to suffer it,
 Tho' gone too far, heav'n knows — 'Tis I am guilty —
 I have took pains, as you I know observ'd,
 To hinder you from diving in the secret,
 And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detection.

Alon. Thou dost confound me.

Zan. I confound myself ;
 And frankly own it, tho' to my shame I own it ;
 Nought but your life in danger could have torn
 The secret out, and made me own my crime.

Alon. Speak quickly ; Zanga, speak.

Zan. Not yet, dread Sir :
 First I must be assur'd, that if you find
 The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assur'd me,
 Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.

Alon. Oh ! 'twill, by heav'n.

Zan. Alas ! I fear it much,
 And scarce can hope so far ; but I of this
 Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
 From all self-violence, and save my Lord.

Alon. I trebly swear.

Zan. You'll bear it like a man ?

Alon. A god.

Zan. Such have you been to me, these tears confess it,
 And

And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me :
 And what amends is now within my pow'r,
 But to confess, expose myself to justice,
 And as a blessing claim my punishment ?
 Know then, Don Carlos——

Alon. Oh !

Zan. You cannot bear it.

Alon. Go on, I'll have it, though it blast mankind ;
 I'll have it all, and instantly. Go on.

Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night——

‘ Enter Leonora.

‘ *Leon.* My Lord Alonzo, you are absent from us,
 And quite undo our joy.

‘ *Alon.* I'll come, my love :

‘ Be not our friends deserted by us both ;

‘ I'll follow you this moment.

‘ *Leon.* My good Lord,

‘ I do observe severity of thought

‘ Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the Moors ?

‘ *Alon.* No, my delight.

‘ *Leon.* What then employ'd your mind ?

‘ *Alon.* Thou love, and only thou ; so Heav'n befriend

‘ As other thought can find no entrance here. [me,

‘ *Leon.* How good in you, my Lord, whom nations

‘ Solicit, and a world in arms obeys, [cares

‘ To drop one thought on me !

‘ [He shews the utmost impatience.

‘ *Alon.* Dost thou then prize it ?

‘ *Leon.* Do you then ask it ?

‘ *Alon.* Know then, to thy comfort,

‘ Thou hast me all, my throbbing heart is full

‘ With thee alone, I've thought of nothing else ;

‘ Nor shall, I from my soul believe, till death.

‘ My life, our friends expect thee.

‘ *Leon.* I obey.

[Exit Leon.

‘ *Alon.* Is that the face of curs'd hypocrisy ?

‘ If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,

‘ And beauty shall no more belong to heav'n——

‘ Don Carlos did return at dead of night——

‘ Proceed, good Zanga, so thy tale began.

‘ *Zan.* Don Carlos did return at dead of night ;

That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I

Command the watch that guards the palace gate.
He told me he had letters for the king,
Dispatch'd from you.

Alon. The villain ly'd !

Zan. My Lord,

I pray forbear—— Transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,
(Who could suspect him of an artifice ?)
No farther I enquir'd, but let him pass,
False to my trust, at least imprudent in it.
Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden,
As is my custom, when the night's serene,
And took a moon-light walk : when soon I heard
A rustling in an arbour that was near me.
I saw two lovers in each other's arms,
Embracing and embrac'd. Anon the man
Arose, and falling back some paces from her,
Gaz'd ardently awhile, then rush'd at once,
And throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly figh'd ; " Oh, night of ecstasy !
When shall we meet again ?" Don Carlos then
Led Leonora forth.

Alon. Oh, Oh, my heart ! [He sinks into a chair]

Zan. Groan on, and with the sound refresh my soul !

'Tis through his heart, his knees smite one another.
'Tis thro' his brain, his eye-balls roll in anguish. [Aside.
My Lord, my Lord, why do you rack my soul ?
• Speak to me, let me know that you still live.
• Do not you know me, Sir ? Pray look upon me ;
• You think too deeply. I'm your own Zanga,
• So lov'd, so cherish'd, and so faithful to you —
• Why start you in such fury ? Nay, my Lord,
• For heav'n's sake sheath your sword ! What can this
• Fool that I was to trust you with the secret, [mean ?
• And you unkind to break your word with me.
• Oh, passion for a woman ! On the ground ?
• Where is your boasted courage ? Where your scorn,
• And prudent rage, that was to cure your grief,
• And chase your love-bred agonies away ?
Rise, Sir, for honour's sake. Why should the Moors,
Why should the vanquish'd triumph ?

Alon. 'Would to heav'n

• That

‘ That I were lower still !’ Oh, she was all !—
 My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
 All stoop to her, my blood was her possession.
 Deep in the secret foldings of my heart
 She liv’d with life, and far the dearer she.
 But——‘ and’ no more——‘ set nature on a blaze,
 ‘ Give her a fit of jealousy——away——’
 To think on’t is the torment of the damn’d,
 And not to think on’t is impossible.
 ‘ How fair the cheek that first alarm’d my soul !
 ‘ How bright the eye that set it on a flame !
 ‘ How soft the breast on which I laid my peace
 ‘ For years to slumber, unawak’d by care !
 ‘ How fierce the transport ! how sublime the bliss !]
 ‘ How deep, how black, the horror and despair !’
Zan. You said you’d bear it like a man.
Alon. I do.

Am I not almost distracted ?

Zan. Pray be calm.

Alon. As hurricanes : be thou assur’d of that.

Zan. Is this the wife Alonzo ?

Alon. Villain, no !

He dy’d in the arbour, he was murder’d there ;

‘ I am his daemon though——My wife ! my wife !—

Zan. Alas ! he weeps.

Alon. Go, dig her grave.

Zan. My lord !

Alon. But that her blood’s too hot, I would carouse it

Around my bridal board.

Zan. And I would pledge thee.

[Aside.]

Alon. But I may talk too fast. Pray let me think,

And reason mildly.—Wedded and undone

Before one night descends.—Oh, hasty evil !

What friend to comfort me in my extreme !

Where’s Carlos ? Why is Carlos absent from me ?

Does he know what has happen’d ?

‘ *Zan.* My good Lord !

‘ *Alon.* Oh, depth of horror ! He !——My bosom

‘ *Zan.* Alas, compose yourself, my Lord. [friend !

‘ *Alon.* To death !

“ Gaze on her with both eyes so ardently !”

“ Give them the vultures, tear him all in pieces !

‘ Zan. Most excellent ! [Aside.]
 ‘ Alon. Hark ! you can keep a secret.
 ‘ In yonder arbour bound with jasmine.—
 ‘ Who’s that ? What villain’s that ? Unhand her—
 Murder ! —

‘ Tear them asunder — Murder — How they grind
 ‘ My heart betwixt them ! — Oh, let go my heart !
 ‘ Yet let it go — “ Embracing and embrac’d ! ”
 ‘ Oh, pestilence ! — Who let him in ? A traitor..

[Goes to stab Zanga, he prevents him.]
 ‘ Alas ! my head turns round, and my limbs fail me.’

Zan. My Lord !

Alon. Oh, villain, villain, most accurst !
 If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed ?

Zan. Hear me, my Lord, your anger will abate.
 I knew it not, I saw them in the garden ;
 But saw no more than you might well expect
 To see in lovers destin’d for each other.
 By heav’n I thought their meeting innocent.
 Who could suspect fair Leonora’s virtue,
 ‘Till after-proofs conspir’d to blacken it ?
 Sad proofs, which came too late, which broke not out,
 (Eternal curses on Alvarez’ haste !)

‘Till holy rites had made the wanton yours ;
 And then, I own, I labour’d to conceal it,
 In duty and compassion to your peace.

Alon. Live now, be damn’d hereafter ; for I want thee.
 Oh, night of ecstasy ! — Ha ! was’t not so ?

“ I will enjoy this murder ” — Let me think —
 The jasmine bow’r — ’tis secret and remote ;
 Go wait me there, and take thy dagger with thee.

[Exit Zanga.]

How the sweet sound still sings within my ear !

“ When shall we meet again ? ” — To-night, in hell.

As he is going, enter Leonora.

Ha ! I’m surpriz’d ! I stagger at her charms !
 Oh, angel-devil ! — Shall I stab her now ?
 No, it shall be as I at first determin’d ?
 To kill her now were half my vengeance lost.
 Then must I now dissemble — if I can.

Leon. My Lord, excuse me ; ‘ fee, a second time ?
 I come in embassy from all your friends,
 Whose joys are languid, uninspir’d by you.

Alon.

Alon. This moment, Leonora, I was coming
To thee, and all—but sure, or I mistake,
Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy.

Leon. Why sighs my Lord?

Alon. I sigh'd not, Leonora.

Leon. I thought you did; your sighs are mine, my
And I shall feel them all. [Lord,

Alon. Dost flatter me?

Leon. If my regards for you are flattery,

Full far indeed I stretch'd the compliment

In this day's solemn rite.

Alon. What rite?

Leon. You sport me.

Alon. Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.

Leon. And so is mine—I look on cheerfulness,
As on the health of virtue.

Alon. Virtue!—Damn—,

Leon. What says my Lord?

Alon. Thou art exceeding fair.

Leon. Beauty alone is but of little worth;
But when the soul and body of a piece,
Both shine alike, then they obtain a price,
And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heav'n's pay on earth for such great souls as yours;
If fair and innocent, I am your due.

Alon. Innocent!

[Aside.]

Leon. How! my Lord, I interrupt you.

Alon. No, my best life, I must not part with thee,
This hand is mine. Oh, what a hand is here?
So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost!

Leon. In tears, my Lord?

Alon. What less can speak my joy?

I gaze, and I forget my own existence;

'T is all a vision, my head swims in heav'n.

Wherefore! Oh, wherefore this expence of beauty?

And wherefore? Oh!—

Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes;
And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl destruction.—

Leon. How, my Lord! what mean you?

‘ Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
‘ Or cast me out for ever from your love.

‘ *Alon.* Art thou concern’d for me?’

Leon. My Lord, you fright me.

Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?

‘ I am ill-us’d, my Lord, I must not bear it.’

Why, when I woo your hand, is it deny’d me?

Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me?

Nay, my good Lord, I have a title here,

[*Taking his hand.*]

And I will have it. Am not I your wife?

Have not I just authority to know

That heart which I have purchas’d with my own?

‘ Lay it before me then; it is my due.

‘ Unkind Alonzo! though I might demand it,

‘ Behold, I kneel! See, Leonora kneels,

‘ And deigns to be a beggar for her own!

Tell me the secret, I conjure you tell me.

‘ The bride foregoes the homage of her day,

‘ Alvarez’ daughter trembles in the dust.’

Speak then, I charge you speak, or I expire,

And load you with my death. My Lord—my Lord!

Alon. Ha, ha, ha!

[*He breaks from her, and she sinks upon the floor.*]

Leon. Are these the joys which fondly I conceiv’d?

And is it thus a wedded life begins?

What did I part with, when I gave my heart?

I knew not that all happiness went with it.

Why did I leave my tender father’s wing,

And venture into love? The maid that loves

Goes out to sea upon a shatter’d plank,

And puts her trust in miracles for safety.

Where shall I sigh? Where pour out my complaints?

He that should hear, should succour, should redress,

He is the source of all.

Alon. Go to thy chamber,

I soon will follow; that which now disturbs thee

Shall be clear’d up, and thou shalt not condemn’ me.

[*Exit Leon.*]

Oh, how like innocence she looks! What, stab her,
And rush into her blood?—I never can.

‘ In

' In her guilt shines, and nature holds my hand.'
How then? Why thus—No more; it is determin'd.

Enter Zanga.

Zan. I fear his heart has fail'd him. She must die.
Can I not rouze the snake that's in his bosom,
To sting our human nature, and effect it?

[Aside.]

Alon. This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,
Those skies through which it rolls, must all have end.
What then is man? the smallest part of nothing.
Day buries day, month month, and year the year,
Our life is but a chain of many deaths;
Can then death's self be fear'd? our life much rather.
Life is the desert, life the solitude,
Death joins us to the great majority:
'Tis to be borne to Plato's, and to Cæsars;
'Tis to be great for ever;
'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition then to die.

Zan. I think, my Lord, you talk'd of death.

Alon. I did.

Zan. I give you joy, then Leonora's dead.

Alon. No, Zanga, ' the greatest guilt is mine,
' Tis mine, who might have mark'd his midnight visit,
' Who might have mark'd his tameness to resign her;
' Who might have mark'd her sudden turn of love:
' These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet,
' (For which the saints absolve my soul!) did wed.

Zan. Where does this tend?

Alon. To shed a woman's blood
Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglorious;
' But just resentment to myself, bears in it
' A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds.
He who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heav'n.

Zan. Alas, my Lord,
'Tis not your reason, but her beauty finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword.
You cannot close an eye that is so bright,
You cannot strike a breast that is so soft,
That has ten thousand ecstasies in store—
For Carlos?—No, my Lord, I mean for you.

Alon.

Alon. Oh, through my heart and marrow ! Pr'ythee
spare me :

Not more upbraid the weakness of thy lord.
I own, I try'd, I quarrell'd with my heart,
And push'd it on, and bid it give her death ;
But, Oh, her eyes struck first, and murder'd me.

Zan. I know not what to answer to my Lord.
Men are but men ; we did not make ourselves.
Farewel then, my best Lord, since you must die.
Oh, that I were to share your monument,
And in eternal darkness close these eyes
Against those scenes which I am doom'd to suffer !

Alon. What dost thou mean ?

Zan. And is it then unknown ?

Oh, grief of heart to think that you should ask it !
Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,
Else could you doubt when you are laid in dust —
But it will cut my poor heart through and through,
To see those revel on your sacred tomb,
Who brought you thither by their lawless loves.
For there they'll revel, and exult to find
Him sleep so fast, who else might marr their joys..

Alon. Distraction ! — But Don Carlos well thou know'it
Is sheath'd in steel, and bent on other thoughts.

Zan. I'll work him to the murder of his friend ;
Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,
While her last kiss still glows upon his cheek. [Aside.
But when he finds Alonzo is no more,
How will he rush like lightning to her arms !
There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul ;
But not in grief — sad obsequies to thee ! —
But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear.
The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstasy,
Their throbbing hearts that jostle one another ?
Thank heav'n, these torments will be all my own.

Alon. I'll ease thee of that pain. Let Carlos die,
O'ertake him on the road, and see it done.

*Tis my command. [Gives his signet..

Zan. I dare not disobey..

Alon. My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.

Zan. Ah, Sir ! think, think again. Are all men buried
In Carlos' grave ? You know not woman-kind.
When once the throbbing of the heart has broke

The modest zone, with which it first was ty'd,
Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.

Alon. That thought has more of hell than had the
Another, and another, and another ! [former.
And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb.
I am convinc'd ; I must not, will not die.

Zan. You cannot die ; nor can you murder her.
What then remains ? In nature no third way,
But to forget, and so to love again.

Alon. Oh !

Zan. If you forgive, the world will call you good ;
If you forget, the world will call you wise ;
If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you, very, very kind.

Alon. Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies,
Though my arm trembles at the stroke, she dies.

Zan. That's truly great. What think you 'twas set up
The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
But doing right in stern despite to nature,
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, august, and god-like justice call'd ?
At Aulis one pour'd out a daughter's life,
And gain'd more glory than by all his wars ;
Another slew his sister in just rage ;
A third, the theme of all succeeding times,
Gave to the cruel ax a darling son.
Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
As he at Carthage, an immortal name !
Yet there is one step left above them all,
Above their history, above their fable,
A wife, bride, mistress unenjoy'd — do that,
And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory.

Alon. 'Tis done ! — Again new transports fire my
I had forgot it, 'tis my bridal night. [brain a
Friend, give me joy, we must be gay together ;
See that the festival be duly honour'd,

And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
And music gives the elevating sound,
And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, Zanga, thou my solemn friends invite,
From the dark realms of everlasting night,

Call vengeance, call the furies, call despair,
 And death, our chief-invited guest, be there;
 He with pale hand shall lead the bride, and spread
 Eternal curtains round our nuptial bed. [Exeunt.]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T . V.

Enter Alonzo.

• O H, pitiful ! Oh, terrible to fight !
 • Poor mangled shade ! all cover'd o'er with wounds,
 • And so disguis'd with blood ! — Who murder'd thee ?
 • Tell thy sad tale, and thou shalt be reveng'd.
 • Ha ! Carlos ? — Horror ! Carlos ? — Oh, away !
 • Go to the grave, or let me sink to mine.
 • I cannot bear the fight — What fight ? — Where am I ?
 • There's nothing here — If this was fancy's work,
 • She draws a picture strongly. ——————

Enter Zanga.

• Zan. Ha ! — You're pale.

Alon. Is Carlos murder'd ?

Zan. I obey'd your order.

Six ruffians overtook him on the road ;
 He fought as he was wont, and four he slew.
 Then funk beneath an hundred wounds to death.
 His last breath blest Alonzo, and desir'd
 His bones might rest near yours.

Alon. Oh, Zanga ! Zanga !

But I'll not think ; for I must act, and thinking
 Would ruin me for action. ' Oh, the medley
 • Of right and wrong ! the chaos of my brain !
 • He should, and should not die — You should obey,
 • And not obey — It is a day of darkness,
 • Of contradictions, and of many deaths.'
 Where's Leonora then ? Quick, answer me :
 I'm deep in horrors, I'll be deeper still.
 I find thy artifice did take effect,
 And she forgives my late deportment to her.

Zan. I told her, from your childhood you was wont

On any great surprize, but chiefly then
 When cause of sorrow bore it company,
 To have your passion shake the seat of reason ;
 A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er,
 Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death,
 (Wisely suppressing by what means he fell)
 And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted ;
 But such the honest artifice I us'd,
 And such her ardent wish it should be true,
 That she, at length, was fully satisfy'd.

‘ *Alon.* ’Twas well she was. In our late interview
 ‘ My passion so far threw me from my guard
 ‘ (Methinks ’tis strange !) that conscious of her guilt,
 ‘ She saw not through its thin disguise my heart.

‘ *Zan.* ’ But what design you, Sir, and how ?

Alon. I’ll tell thee.

Thus I’ve ordain’d it. In the jasamine bow’r,
 The place which she dishonour’d with her guilt,
 There will I meet her ; the appointment’s made ;
 And calmly spread (for I can do it now)
 The blackness of her crime before her sight,
 And then with all the cool solemnity
 Of public justice, give her to the grave.

[Exit.]

‘ *Zan.* Why, get thee gone ! horror and night go with
 ‘ Sisters of Acheron, go hand in hand, [thee !
 ‘ Go dance around the bow’r, and close them in ;
 ‘ And tell them that I sent you to salute them.
 ‘ Profane the ground, and for th’ ambrosial rose,
 ‘ And breath of jasmine, let hemlock blacken,
 ‘ And deadly nightshade poison all the air,
 ‘ For the sweet nightingale may ravens croak,
 ‘ Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves ;
 ‘ May serpents winding up the trees let fall
 ‘ Their hissing necks upon them from above,
 ‘ And mingle kisses—such as I should give them.’ [Exit.]

SCENE, *the Bower.*

Leonora sleeping. Enter Alonzo.

Alon. Ye amaranths ! ye roses, like the morn !
 Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange groves !
 Why do you smile ? Why do you look so fair ?

Are ye not blasted as I enter in ?

• Yes, see how every flow'r lets fall its head !

• How shudders every leaf without a wind !

• How every green is as the ivy pale ?

Did ever midnight ghosts assemble here ?

Have these sweet echoes ever learn'd to groan ?

Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bow'r !

Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receiv'st

A—murderer ! Oh, I shall stain thy lilies,

And horror will usurp the seat of bliss.

• So Lucifer broke into Paradise,

• And soon damnation follow'd.' [He advances.] Ha ! she
sleeps — — —

The day's uncommon heat has overcome her.

Then take, my longing eyes, your last full gaze.

Oh, what a sight is here ! how dreadful fair !

Who would not think that being innocent ?

Where shall I strike ? Who strikes her, strikes himself.

My own life-blood will issue at her wound.

• Oh, my distracted heart !—Oh, cruel heav'n !

• To give such charms as these, and then call man,

• Mere man, to be your executioner.

• Was it because it was too hard for you ?

But see, she smiles ! I never shall smile more.

It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss,

[Going, he starts back.]

Ha ! smile again. She dreams of him she loves.

Curse on her charms ! I'll stab her through them all.

[As he is going to strike she wakes.]

Leon. My Lord, your stay was long, and yonder lull
Of falling waters tempted me to rest,
Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.

Alon. Ye pow'r's ! with what an eye she mends the day !
While they were clos'd I should have giv'n the blow. [Aside.]

• Oh, for a last embrace ! and then for justice :

• Thus heav'n and I shall both be satisfy'd.'

Leon. What says my Lord ?

Alon. Why this Alonzo says ;

If love were endless, men were gods : 'tis that

Does counterbalance travel, danger, pain —

'Tis heav'n's expedient to make mortals bear

The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

Leon. Alas, my Lord ! why talk you of the grave ?

Your

Your friend is dead ; in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss ; repair it with my love.

Alon. Thy love, thou piece of witchcraft ! I would say,
Thou brightest angel ! I could gaze for ever.

‘ Where hadst thou this, enchantress, tell me where,
‘ Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
‘ My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain ?
‘ Ev’n now thou swim’st before me. I shall lose thee—
‘ No, I will make thee sure, and clasp thee all.

‘ Who turn’d this slender waist with so much art,
‘ And shut perfection in so small a ring ?

‘ Who spread that pure expanse of white above,
‘ On which the dazzled sight can find no rest ;

‘ But, drunk with beauty, wanders up and down
‘ For ever, and for ever finds new charms ?

But Oh, those eyes ! those murderers ! Oh, whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs ? From heav’n ?
Thou didst ; and ’tis religion to adore them.

Leon. My best Alonzo, moderate your thoughts.
Extremes still fright me, tho’ of love itself.

Alon. Extremes indeed ! it hurried me away ;
But I come home again—and now for justice—

And now for death—It is impossible—

‘ Sure such were made by Heav’n guiltless to sin,
‘ Or in their guilt to laugh at punishment.’

I leave her to just Heav’n. [Drops the dagger, and goes off.]

Leon. Ha, a dagger !

What dost thou say, thou minister of death ?

What dreadful tale dost tell me ?—Let me think—

Enter Zanga.

Zan. Death to my tow’ring hopes ! Oh, fall from high !
My close, long-labour’d scheme at once is blasted.

That dagger, found, will cause her to enquire ;

Enquiry will discover all ; my hopes

Of vengeance perish ; I myself am lost—

Curse on the coward’s heart ! wither his hand,

Which held the steel in vain !—What can be done ?

Where can I fix ?—That’s something still—’twill breed

Fell rage and bitterness betwixt their souls,

Which may perchance grow up to greater evil :

If not, ’tis all I can — It shall be so—

[Aside.]

Leon. Oh, Zanga, I am sinking in my fears !

Alonzo dropp'd this dagger as he left me,
And left me in a strange disorder too.

What can this mean? Angels preserve his life!

Zan. Yours, Madam, yours.

Leon. What, Zanga, dost thou say?

Zan. Carry your goodness, then, to such extremes,
So blinded to the faults of him you love,
That you perceive not he is jealous?

Leon. Heav'ns!

And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.

What villain could inspire him with that thought?

It is not of the growth of his own nature.

Zan. Some villain; who, hell knows; but he is jealous;
And 'tis most fit a heart so pure as yours
Do itself justice, and assert its honour,
And make him conscious of its stab to virtue.

Leon. Jealous! it fickens at my heart. Unkind,
Ungen'rous, groundless, weak, and insolent!

Why, wherefore, and what shadow of occasion?

‘ ‘ Tis fascination, ‘ tis the wrath of Heav’n

‘ For the collected crimes of all his race.’

Oh, how the great man lessens to my thought!

How could so mean a vice as jealousy,

‘ Unnatural child of ignorance and guilt,

‘ Which tears and feeds upon its parent’s heart,

Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?

I scorn and hate, yet love him and adore.

I cannot will not, dare not think it true,

Till from himself I know it.

[Exit.

Zan. This succeeds

Just to my wish. Now she, with violence,

Upbraids him; he, well knowing she is guilty,

Rages no less: and if on either side

The waves run high, there still lives hopes of ruin.

Enter Alonzo.

My Lord——

Alon. Oh, Zanga, hold thy peace! I am no coward;
But Heav’n itself did hold my hand; I felt it,
By the well-being of my soul, I did.
I’ll think of vengeance at another seafon.

Zan. My Lord, her guilt——

Alon. Perdition on thee, Moor,
For that one word! Ah, do not rouse that thought!
I have

I have o'erwhelm'd it as much as possible :
 ' Away, then, let us talk of other things.'
 I tell thee, Moor, I love her to distraction.
 If 'tis my shame, why, be it so—I love her ;
 ' Nor can I help it ; 'tis impos'd upon me
 ' By some superior and resistless pow'r.'
 I could not hurt her to be lord of earth ;
 It shocks my nature like a stroke from heav'n.
 ' Angels defend her, as if innocent.'
 But see, my Leonora comes—Begone. [Exit Zanga.]

Enter Leonora.

Oh, seen for ever, yet for ever new !
 The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
 Inflicting wound on wound.

Leon. Alas, my Lord !
 What need of this to me ?

Alon. Ha ! dost thou weep ?

Leon. Have I no cause ?

Alon. If love is thy concern,
 Thou hast no cause : none ever lov'd like me.
 ' But wherefore this ? Is it to break my heart,
 ' Which loses so much blood for every tear ?

Leon. Is it so tender ?

Alon. Is it not ? Oh, Heav'n !

' Doubt of my love ! Why, I am nothing else ;
 ' It quite absorbs my every other passion.'

Oh, that this one embrace would last for ever !

Leon. Could this man ever mean to wrong my virtue ?
 Could this man e'er design upon my life ?
 Impossible ! I throw away the thought. [Aside.]
 These tears declare how much I taste the joy
 Of being folded in your arms and heart ;
 My universe does lie within that space.
 This dagger bore false witness.

Alon. Ha, my dagger !
 It rouses horrid images. Away,
 Away with it, and let us talk of love,

' Plunge ourselves deep into the sweet illusion,
 ' And hide us there from ev'ry other thought.

Leon. It touches you.

Alon. Let's talk of love.

Leon. Of death !

Alon. As thou lov'st happiness—

Leon. Of murder!

Alon. Rash,

Rash woman! yet forbear.

‘ *Leon.* Approve my wrongs!

‘ *Alon.* Then must I fly, for thy sake and my own.

‘ *Leon.* Nay, by my injuries, you first must hear me:

‘ Stab me, then think it much to hear my groan!

‘ *Alon.* Heav'n strike me deaf!

Leon. It well may sting you home.

Alon. Alas, thou quite mistak'st my cause of pain!

Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.

Leon. Who has most cause, you or myself? What act
Of my whole life encourag'd you to this?

Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?

You find me kind, and think me kind to all;

The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.

What could inspire the thought? We oft'nest judge

From our own hearts; and is yours then so frail,

It prompts you to conceive thus ill of me?

He that can stoop to harbour such a thought,

Deserves to find it true. [Holding him.]

‘ *Alon.* ‘ Oh, sex, sex, sex! ’ [Turning on her.]

‘ The language of you all.’ Ill-fated woman!

Why hast thou forc'd me back into the gulf

Of agonies I had block'd up from thought?

‘ I know the cause; thou saw'st me impotent

‘ Ere while to hurt thee, therefore thou turn'st on me;

‘ But, by the pangs I suffer, to thy woe:

For, since thou hast replung'd me in my torture,

I will be satisfy'd.

Leon. Be satisfy'd!

Alon. Yes, thy own mouth shall witness it against thee;
I will be satisfy'd.

Leon. Of what?

Alon. Of what!

How dar'st thou ask that question? Woman, woman,
Weak and assur'd at once! thus 'tis for ever.

Who told thee that thy virtue was suspected?

Who told thee I design'd upon thy life?

You found the dagger; but that could not speak:

Nor

Nor did I tell thee; who did tell thee then?
Guilt, conscious guilt!

Leon. This to my face! Oh, Heav'n!

Alon. This to thy very soul.

Leon. Thou'rt not in earnest?

Alon. Serious as death.

Leon. Then heav'n have mercy on thee.

Till now I struggled not to think it true;

I sought conviction, and would not believe it.

And dost thou force me? This shall not be borne;

Thou shalt repent this insult.

[Going.]

Alon. Madam, stay.

Your passion's wife; 'tis a disguise for guilt:

'Tis my turn now to fix you here a while;

You and your thousand arts shall not escape me.

Leon. Arts?

Alon. Arts. Confess; for death is in my hand.

Leon. 'Tis in your words.

Alon. Confess, confess, confess!

Nor tear my veins with passion to compel thee.

Leon. I scorn to answer thee, presumptuous man!

Alon. Deny then, and incur a fouler shame.

Where did I find this picture?

Leon. Ha, Don Carlos!

By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own.

Alon. I know it; but is vice so very rank,

That thou shouldst dare to dash it in my face?

Nature is sick of thee, abandon'd woman!

Leon. Repent.

Alon. Is that for me?

Leon. Fall, ask my pardon.

Alon. Astonishment!

Leon. Dar'st thou persist to think I am dishonest?

Alon. I know thee so.

Leon. This blow, then, to thy heart——

[She stabs herself, he endeavours to prevent her.]

Alon. Hoa, Zanga! Isabella! hoa! she bleeds!

Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

Leon. This is the only way I would wound thee,
Tho' most unjust. Now think me guilty still.

THE REVENGE.

Enter Isabella.

Alon. Bear her to instant help. The world to save her.

Leon. Unhappy man! well may'st thou gaze and tremble: But fix thy terror and amazement right;

Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.

What haist thou done? Whom censur'd?—*Leonora!*

When thou hadst censur'd, thou wouldest save her life:

Oh, inconsistent! Should I live in shame,

Or stoop to any other means but this

To assert my virtue? No; she who disputes

Admits it possible she might be guilty.

While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,

While it might look like an excuse to thee,

I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence:

But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound

Which least I feel, is that my dagger made.

[*Isabella leads out Leonora.*

Alon. Ha! was this woman guilty?—And if not— How my thought darkens that way! Grant, kind Heav'n, That she prove guilty; or my being end.

Is that my hope, then?—Sure the sacred dust Of her that bore me trembles in its urn.

Is it in man the sore distress to bear, When hope itself is blacken'd to despair,

When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain

In hell, a refuge from severer pain?

[*Exit.*

Enter Zanga.

Zan. How stands the great account 'twixt me and ven- Tho' much is paid, yet still it owes me much, [geance? And I will not abate a single groan—

Ha! that were well—but that were fatal too—

Why, be it so—Revenge so truly great,

Would come too cheap, if bought with less than life.

* Come, death, come, hell, then; 'tis resolv'd, 'tis done.*

Enter Isabella.

Isab. Ah, Zanga, see me tremble! Has not yet Thy cruel heart its fill?—Poor *Leonora*—

Zan. Welters in blood, and gasps for her last breath. What then? We all must die.

Isab. Alonzo raves, And, in the tempest of his grief, has thrice Attempted on his life. At length disarm'd.

He calls his friends that save him his worst foes,
And importunes the skies for swift perdition.
Thus in his storm of sorrow. After pause,
He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga,
For Zanga rav'd; and see, he seeks you here,
To learn the truth which most he dreads to know.

Zan. Begone. Now, now, my soul, consummate all.

[Exit Isab.]

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. Oh, Zanga!

Zan. Do not tremble so; but speak.

Alon. I dare not.

[Falls on him.]

Zan. You will drown me with your tears.

Alon. Have I not cause?

Zan. As yet you have no cause.

Alon. Dost thou too rave?

Zan. Your anguish is to come:

You much have been abus'd.

Alon. Abus'd! by whom?

Zan. To know were little comfort.

Alon. Oh, 'twere much!

Zan. Indeed!

Alon. By Heav'n! Oh, give him to my fury!

Zan. Born for your use, I live but to oblige you.
Know, then, 'twas—I.

Alon. Am I awake?

Zan. For ever.

Thy wife is guiltless—that's one transport to me;
And I, I let thee know it—that's another.
I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress,
I forg'd the letter, I dispos'd the picture;
I hated, I despis'd, and I destroy.

Alon. Oh!

[Swoons.]

Zan. Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow!
Where are you? Crown me, shadow me with laurels,
Ye spirits which delight in just revenge!
Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep;
Let Afric and her hundred thrones rejoice:
Oh, my dear countrymen, look down, and see
How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!
I tread on haughty Spain, and all her kings.
But this is mercy, this is my indulgence;

Tis

Zan. This too is well. The fix'd and noble mind
 Turns all occurrence to its own advantage;
 And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
 Were I not thus reduc'd, thou wouldst not know,
 That, thus reduc'd, I dare defy thee still.
 Torture thou may'st, but thou shalt ne'er despise me.
 The blood will follow where the knife is driven,
 The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,
 And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain.
 But these are foreign to the soul: not mine
 The groans that issue, or the tears that fall;
 They disobey me; on the rack I scorn thee,
 As when my faulchion clove thy helm in battle.

Alv. Peace, villain!

Zan. While I live, old man, I'll speak:
 And well I know thou dar'st not kill me yet;
 For that would rob thy blood-hounds of their prey.

Alon. Who call'd Alonzo?

Alv. No one call'd, my son.

Alon. Again! — 'Tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.
 Oh, how I laugh at all that this can do!

[*Shewing the dagger.*

The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,
 Were giv'n before; I am already dead;
 This only marks my body for the grave. [*Stabs himself.*
 Afric, thou art reveng'd — Oh, Leonora! — [*Dies.*

Zan. Good russians, give me leave; my blood is yours,
 The wheel's prepar'd, and you shall have it all.
 Let me but look one moment on the dead,
 And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.

[*He goes to Alonzo's body.*

Is this Alonzo? Where's the haughty mien?
 Is that the hand which smote me? Heav'ns, how pale!
 And art thou dead? So is my enmity.
 I war not with the dust. The great, the proud,
 The conqueror of Afric was my foe.
 A lion preys not upon carcases.
 This was thy only method to subdue me.
 Terror and doubt fall on me: all thy good
 Now blazes, all thy guilt is in the grave.
 Never had man such funeral applause:
 If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.

Oh,

Oh, Vengeance, I have follow'd thee too far,
And to receive me Hell blows all her fires.

[*He is borne off.*

Alv. Dreadful effects of jealousy ! a rage
In which the wife with caution will engage ;
Reluctant long, and tardy to believe,
Where, sway'd by nature, we ourselves deceive,
Where our own folly joins the villain's art,
And each man finds a Zanga in his heart.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

By a Friend.

OUR author sent me, in an humble strain
To beg you'd bless the offspring of his brain ;
And I, your proxy, promis'd, in your name,
The child should live, at least six days of fame.
I like the brat, but still his faults can find ;
And, by the parent's leave, will speak my mind.
Gallants, pray, tell me, do you think 'twas well,
To let a willing maid lead apes in hell ?
You nice ladies, should you think it right,
To eat no supper——on your wedding night ?
Should English husbands dare to starve their wives,
Be sure they'd lead most comfortable lives !
But he loves mischief, and, with groundless fears,
Would fain set loving couples by the ears ;
Would spoil the tender husbands of our nation,
By teaching them his vile, outlandish fashion.
But we've been taught in our good-natur'd clime,
That jealousy, tho' just, is still a crime,
And will be still ; for (not to blame the plot)
That same Alonzo was a stupid sot,
To kill a bride, a mistress unenjoy'd——
'Twere some excuse, had the poor man been cloy'd :
To kill her on suspicion, ere he knew
Whether the heinous crime were false or true——
The priest said grace, she met him in the bower,
In hopes she might anticipate an hour——
Love was her errand ; but the hot-brain'd Spaniard,
Instead of love—produc'd—a filthy poignard——
Had he been wise, at this their private meeting,
The proof o' th' pudding had been in the eating ;
Madam had then been pleas'd, and Don contented,
And all this blood and murder been prevent'd.
Britons, be wise, and from this sad example,
Ne'er break a bargain, but first take a sample.









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